Tuesday, March 10, 2026 No 69 ₹7

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# Crude price surge unlikely to stoke inflation sharply: FM

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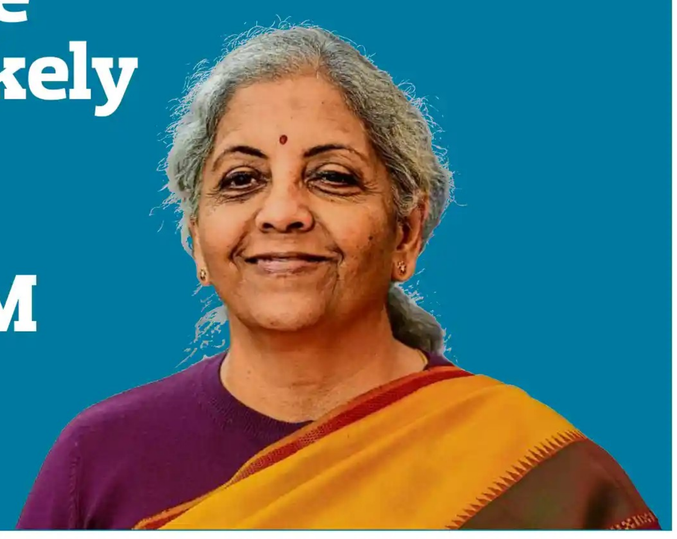

# Lok Sabha to take up no-confidence motion against Speaker today

Page 7

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# India's arms imports decline; still second-largest globally

## SIPRI says reliance on foreign weapons persists despite 'Make in India' push

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India retains its place as the world's second-largest importer of arms in 2021-25, with Russia, France, and Israel being the top three suppliers, but the extent of imports has dropped marginally compared to the situation five years ago, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said on Monday in its latest report.

The world's topmost importer of arms is war-ravaged Ukraine, followed by India, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Pakistan.

India's 4% drop in arms imports when compared to the 2016-20 period can be partly attributed to India's growing ability to design and produce its own weapons—although substantial delays often occur in domestic production, the SIPRI report says.

"However, the planned orders—including up to 140 combat aircraft from France and six submarines from Germany—are an indication of New Delhi's continued and probably increasing reliance on foreign suppliers," it adds.

The European institute that tracks worldwide arms sales observes that India has shifted its arms relations away from Russia toward Western suppliers, especially France, Israel, and the USA, over the past decade.

### Russia share falls

Russia's share of Indian arms imports dropped from 70% in 2011–15 to 51% in 2016–20 and further down to 40% in 2021–25.

In a war with Russia for four years, Ukraine accounts for 9.7% of global arms imports, followed by India at 8.2%, making New Delhi strategically vulnerable to supply chain disruptions.

SECURITY SPENDING
India's arms purchases declined slightly compared to five years ago
India's imports are largely driven by tensions with China and Pakistan
Ukraine is the world's top arms importer, followed by India, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Pakistan
Over the past decade, India has shifted part of its arms procurement away from Russia toward Western suppliers such as France, Israel and the United States.
The United States, France, Russia, Germany and China were the world's largest arms suppliers in 2021–25
Russia's share of India's arms imports fell from 70% in 2011–15 to 40% in 2021–25.

Both Saudi Arabia and Qatar are responsible for over 6% of overall arms imports, while Pakistan comes in fifth place at 4.2%, substantially increasing its weapons purchases compared to Islamabad's procurement five years ago. Pakistan buys 80% of its weapons from China and another 7% from Türkiye.

### Driven by tensions

India's arms imports are driven by its tensions with both China and Pakistan. These tensions have regularly led to armed conflict, as they did briefly between India and Pakistan in May 2025, with both sides using imported major arms.

Globally, Europe became the world's biggest arms importer in the past five years as European nations hiked their arms imports threefold to supply military hardware to Ukraine in its defence against the Russian invasion.

While Europe accounted for 33% of global arms imports, up from 12% in the previous five-year period, the sharp increase in arms flows to European states pushed global arms transfers up by almost 10%.

The five largest suppliers of major arms in 2021–25 were the United States, France, Russia, Germany, and China. Arms exports by the USA increased by 27% between 2016–20 and 2021–25, giving it a 42% share of total global arms exports.

Also, India doesn't figure among the world's top 25 arms exporters.

## Several cities in Guj & Raj record temperatures above 40°C

**AHMEDABAD, DHNS:** The maximum temperature of over half a dozen cities across Gujarat on Monday surpassed 40 degrees Celsius, significantly higher than the normal temperature even before mid-March.

The temperature in Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Surat, Amreli, Rajkot, Vadodara, Bhuj, Deesa, and Kandla crossed the 40°C mark. Many other parts of the state also witnessed temperatures above normal, ranging from 5 to nearly 10°.

The meteorological department reported that "maximum temperatures were considerably above normal to markedly above normal in parts of the Gujarat region and Saurashtra-Kutch."

Warnings have been issued for heatwave-like conditions in isolated pockets across these districts and cities.

Neighbouring Rajasthan witnessed high temperatures ranging from 36 to above 40° Celsius. The meteorological department has predicted an increase in maximum temperature in the next two days.

In both the states, the met department has predicted a drop of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius after three days, but there may not be any major changes in maximum temperatures.

## Shipping costs, gas shortage hit Morbi's tile industry

SATISH JHA
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

Disruptions in the supply of gas due to the ongoing West Asia conflict have created a fuel crisis for Gujarat's ceramic industry in Morbi, which is heavily reliant on imported natural gas.

"We have barely 10-15 days' supply left. Hundreds of propane-reliant units are shutting down," said Morbi Ceramic Manufacturing Association (Wall Tiles Division) chief Haresh Bopaliya.

"An atmosphere of uncertainty is hanging over not only production but also the export of finished goods. If the situation continues, we will be forced to shut down more units," he said.

The conflict had led to an increase in shipping costs, he noted, adding that shipping companies had also hiked freight costs.

"Overall, the situation looks grim. If it continues, it will lead to massive job cuts," he said. The industry is heavily dependent on migrant workers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, among other states.

An industrialist told *DH* that the state government had promised to supply 50% of the total consumption (as recorded in February) for the time being. "We don't know how long we are going to sustain," he added.

Another industrialist, requesting anonymity, said that nearly 30% of units relying on propane gas had halted operations, with dozens more shutting down with every passing day.

The Morbi district in the Saurashtra region accounts for nearly 90% of Gujarat's total ceramic production, and is said to be the world's second-largest ceramic hub. It is known for floor, wall, and vitrified tiles.

The state government estimates that the area is home to 1,200 ceramic units that directly and indirectly employ about 9 lakh people.

In 2024-25, it recorded exports worth about Rs 15,000 crore.

# Nat'l interest guides India on West Asia: Jaishankar

## Says Iran sought docking for warships at Indian ports

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Tehran had asked New Delhi for permission to let three Iranian Navy ships dock at Indian ports the day Israel and the United States launched a military offensive on the Persian Gulf nation, said External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday, adding that the permission was granted the next day.

He said New Delhi's approach to the widening West Asia conflict would be guided by India's national interest, with the well-being and security of its citizens in the region being the priority.

"India is in favour of peace and urges a return to dialogue and diplomacy. We advocate de-escalation, restraint and ensuring the safety of civilians.," said Jaishankar in his statements in both Houses of Parliament.

"Our national interest, including energy security and trade flows, will always be paramount."

He said that 67,000 Indians had returned from West Asia since the conflict started. Jaishankar also said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had had phone calls with the leaders of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, as well as with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"While attempts have been made, contacts with Iran at the leadership level are obviously difficult at this time," he said, adding that he had spoken to his counterpart in Tehran, Abbas Araghchi, on February 28 and March 5.

He did not specify if IRIS Dena, torpedoed by a US submarine off Galle on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka on March 4, was among the three Iranian Navy ships that Tehran wanted to dock at Indian ports.

Its sinking and New Delhi's silence over the incident had raised questions over India's claim of being the net security provider in the region.

Jaishankar, meanwhile, refrained from speaking about IRIS Dena or the way it was torpedoed. He, however, noted that IRIS Lavan, an amphibious landing ship of the Iranian Navy, had docked in Kochi on March 4, and its crew members had been accommodated in Indian Navy facilities.

"We believe that this was the right thing to do, and the Iranian foreign minister expressed his country's thanks for this humane gesture," said Jaishankar.

**S JAISHANKAR**
External Affairs Minister

"For us, the interest of the Indian consumer has and will always be the overriding priority. Where required, Indian diplomacy has supported the endeavours of our energy enterprises in this volatile situation.

# Govt signals no fuel price hike till oil touches $128/barrel or conflict drags on

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The prices of petrol and diesel were unlikely to increase even as prices of crude oil crossed $100 per barrel, indicated Union government officials on Monday.

The situation in the LPG sector was, however, comparatively critical, with the government increasing the wait time for domestic gas cylinder bookings to 25 days from 21 days to stop hoarding amid a perceived shortage.

Senior government officials said the price of fuel would not be increased unless a long-drawn situation arose in West Asia.

Sources indicated that oil-marketing companies (OMCs) would be asked to absorb the losses arising from a global oil price hike due to the escalating situation in Iran, which has closed the Strait of Hormuz, through which a significant number of oil vessels pass.

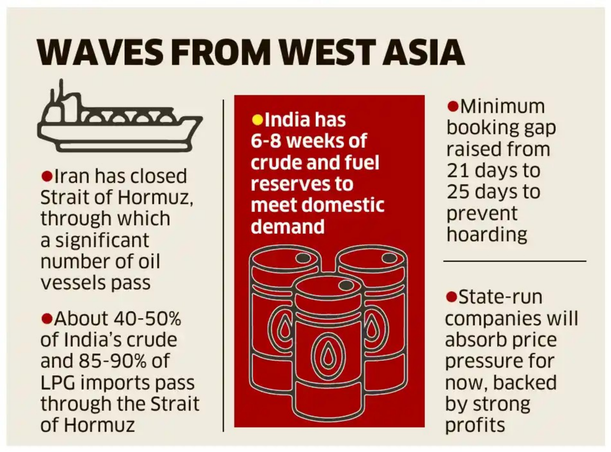
The government has stabilised oil prices in India in the past few years, ensuring that OMCs — most of them government-run — took the hit when oil prices surged, while making up for the losses during slumps.

"We have the resources, and it is unlikely in the foreseeable future... Unless the war stretches for more than a month or oil prices cross $128 per barrel... The OMCs have made financial gains in the past few years, and are comfortable enough to take a temporary hit," said the above-mentioned senior official.

While the G7 has promised to release emergency reserves of crude oil, India is unlikely to contribute. "We have an 'India First' policy, and have to look out for our interests," said the official.

The G7 has released 4.5% of global reserves, amounting to 400 million barrels, bringing the prices of crude oil down.

Meanwhile, Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Puri met International Energy Agency officials on Monday.


WAVES FROM WEST ASIA
Iran has closed Strait of Hormuz, through which a significant number of oil vessels pass
About 40-50% of India's crude and 85-90% of LPG imports pass through the Strait of Hormuz
India has 6-8 weeks of crude and fuel reserves to meet domestic demand
Minimum booking gap raised from 21 days to 25 days to prevent hoarding
State-run companies will absorb price pressure for now, backed by strong profits

### The logistics

The Strait of Hormuz continues to be a chokepoint, with the daily naval traffic dropping from an average of 138 ships to three.

Indian officials said they have 25 days of crude oil reserves and 25 days of product reserves. India has over 1 lakh retail fuel outlets, of which over 90,000 are government-run.

LPG continues to be a worry, with 65% of the total consumption being imported. While the US contributes to 10% of the imports, geographical issues remain. "We are in the world market scouting for LPG," said the official.

Canada has shown interest in selling, and conversations are ongoing with the likes of Algeria, Australia, and Norway.

The ministry on Monday directed refineries to increase production. In urban areas, consumption has hit 6.6-6.7 cylinders annually.

## Govt forms panel to review LPG supply to hotels, restaurants

**NEW DELHI:** With hotels and restaurants facing a shortage of LPG supply, Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Puri said on Monday that a committee of three Executive Directors (EDs) of Oil Marketing Companies has been constituted to review representations for LPG supply to restaurants, hotels and other industries and ensure smooth distribution.

"In light of current geopolitical disruptions to fuel supply and constraints on supply of LPG, the ministry has issued orders to all oil refineries for higher LPG production and using such extra production for domestic LPG use," Puri posted on X.

"The ministry has prioritised domestic LPG supply to households and introduced 25-day inter-booking period to avoid hoarding/black marketing. Non-domestic supplies from imported LPG are being prioritised to essential non-domestic sectors such as hospitals and educational institutions," he said.

"For LPG supply to other non-domestic sectors, a committee of three EDs of OMCs has been constituted to review the representations for LPG supply to restaurants/hotels/other industries," he added

## Kharge demands discussion on India's energy security

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday shot off a letter to Chairman CP Radhakrishnan seeking a discussion on India's energy security against the backdrop of West Asia situation even as his Lok Sabha counterpart Rahul Gandhi claimed that a "scared" government will not allow any debate because it would expose how Prime Minister Narendra Modi is "compromised".

Kharge raised the demand first in Rajya Sabha and followed it up with a letter on his demand for a short-duration discussion on 'Emerging Challenges for India's Energy Security', while recalling that the Chairman has indicated that he would get back to the Opposition on their demand.

# Kashmiri families urge swift evacuation of students stranded in Iran

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

Pleas for the Central government to evacuate Kashmiri students, stranded in war-torn Iran have grown louder as the regional security situation deteriorates sharply.

With widespread US and Israeli airstrikes and blasts reported across Tehran, Qom and other cities, parents say fear for personal safety has reached critical levels.

Kashmiri students, many enrolled in medical and other professional courses, have described life in Iran as increasingly precarious.

Despite the Indian Embassy in Tehran relocating many students to safer areas, including Qom, attacks near student hostels and campuses have reportedly forced some to hide in basements and triggered distress calls home.

In Srinagar, anxious parents staged protests and submitted petitions to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar, the Jammu & Kashmir Lieutenant Governor and Chief Minister, urging swift action to bring their children home.

Student organisations such as the Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA) and the All India Medical Students Association have repeatedly appealed to the Ministry of External Affairs to accelerate evacuation plans and open secure transit routes, including via Armenia.

People's Democratic Party chief Mehbooba Mufti urged the Prime Minister to personally intervene to ensure a safe return for students as hostilities intensify.

Students walk towards their schools after educational institutions reopened following a week-long closure due to protests over the death of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in Srinagar, on Monday. PTI

## Modi stresses linking education to the real-world economy

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday called for accelerating the process of linking the education system with the real-world economy.

Narendra Modi

Addressing a post-budget webinar, Modi underlined the need for increasing focus on artificial intelligence (AI), automation, digital economy and design-driven manufacturing. "It is essential that our curriculum remains updated according to market needs. We must accelerate the process of linking our education system with the real-world economy," the prime minister said.

He claimed that the country is consistently working to connect education with employment and enterprise.

"New models like university townships reflect this approach. Today, India is promoting the A.V.G.C. sector-Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics. India is moving towards an innovation-driven economy," he said.

"Many academicians and academic institutions are connected to this webinar today. I urge you to deliberate on developing your campuses as centres of industry collaboration and research-driven learning. This will provide students with real-world exposure and strengthen the skill ecosystem," he added.

The Prime Minister also called for the development of innovative training models and partnerships to strengthen India's healthcare workforce. "I would like to highlight one important subject: the care economy. In the coming decade, the number of senior citizens in the country will rise rapidly. Moreover, even today, many countries across the world face a huge demand for caregivers. Therefore, in the health sector, new skill-based employment opportunities are emerging for millions of youth," the PM said.

# EC meets parties in Bengal; Trinamool expresses dissatisfaction

**KOLKATA, DHNS:** Even as the Election Commission on Monday held consultations with the political parties and reviewed the preparations for the Assembly polls in West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress accused Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar of silencing its representatives when they were conveying the party's grievances over the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls.

However, the BJP representatives did not raise the roll revision issue during their meeting. They conveyed to the EC officials that the state police and the government should not be allowed to decide the deployment of the central paramilitary forces during the elections to ensure free and fair polling, and proposed holding polling in two to three phases.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), on the other hand, protested against the harassment of the people during the SIR of the electoral rolls and sought polling in a single phase.

People show placards with "go back" at a demonstration during the visit of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar to Kalighat Kali Temple, in Kolkata, on Monday. PTI

However, the EC claimed that most political parties, during meetings with CEC and others, had appreciated the SIR and also reposed their complete faith and trust in the commission.

The poll panel also noted in a press release that political parties had urged it to conduct the elections in one or two phases.

Kumar told the representatives of the political parties that the EC would have zero tolerance towards violence and intimidation of either electors or election staff.

"He was too arrogant. He, himself, speaks and does not allow anyone to speak," senior TMC leader Chandrima Bhattacharya said.

She alleged that the CEC told her not to shout when she was conveying her party's concerns. However, the EC sources said Kumar had just asked Chandrima to calm down when she was reading out the TMC's memorandum to the commission.

# Oppn plans impeachment notice against CEC over SIR

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The I.N.D.I.A bloc is planning to submit an impeachment notice against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in Parliament in the next few days, as the Trinamool Congress is upping the ante against the poll body chief over Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

Gyanesh Kumar

The prime mover of the notice is Trinamool Congress, whose supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, is on a protest from March 6 against the deletion of voters from electoral rolls after the SIR. Upping the ante, TMC MPs also submitted notices in both Houses to discuss "voter disenfranchisement" following the SIR.

If submitted, it will come close on the heels of the Opposition's attempt to remove Om Birla as Speaker and will be the culmination of Opposition plans that started being discussed in August last year. The process to impeach Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma is under process.

Sources said the issue of moving an impeachment motion was raised by Trinamool's Lok Sabha Deputy Leader Shatabdi Roy at a meeting of I.N.D.I.A floor leaders chaired by the Congress president and Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge. Roy referred to Mamata's protest and said that it was important for the Opposition to take the next step against the CEC.

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had also attacked Kumar during his 'vote chori' press conferences, accusing the CEC of colluding with ruling BJP.

The drafting and submission of the notice is in the advanced stage and could be submitted in the next 2-3 days while Opposition floor managers are fine-tuning details like which House the motion will be moved. They are also confident of the requisite number of MPs needed for submitting the notices in either Houses, sources said.

The removal of a CEC is governed by Article 324(5) of the Constitution, which mandates a process similar to that of a Supreme Court judge. A notice seeking to impeach a CEC would require signatures of 100 MPs in Lok Sabha and 50 in Rajya Sabha and spell out the charges.

A three-member committee of a Supreme Court judge, High Court Chief Justice and a distinguished judge will be appointed to enquire into the allegations, if the notice is accepted by the Chair and once it indicts the CEC, a vote is held in both Houses requiring a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to pass. Then the President issues the order for removal.

At present, the Opposition does not have requisite numbers in either Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha to impeach CEC.

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DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

# India stake claim to white-ball throne

**Four limited-overs titles in two years underline their supremacy**

*Page 16*

# Oil prices soar; stocks, rupee fall

**FUEL IMPACT:** Crude nears $120 per barrel; govt rules out immediate hike in retail rates

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With the West Asia crisis showing no signs of de-escalation, Indian financial markets received a jolt on Monday as key equity indices Sensex and Nifty slumped by around 2% and rupee dipped to a fresh lifetime low as surge in oil prices stoked fears of high inflation and weak economic growth.

Brent crude price soared to near $120 a barrel, the highest level since July 2022. The crude oil prices have surged by nearly 60% since the beginning of a joint airstrike by the US and Israel on Iran on February 28.

On Monday itself the crude oil price surged by over 25%.

The surge in crude prices stoked fear of inflationary pressure in India, which imports nearly 90% of crude oil requirements.

According to analysts, every $1 increase in per barrel price of crude oil may increase India's import bill by around $2 billion (over Rs 18,000 crore).

"The sustained rise in crude prices is likely to complicate the RBI's policy outlook by keeping inflation elevated and posing risks to growth," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited.

The Indian rupee crashed to its all-time closing low of 92.33 against the US dollar, losing 59 paise during the session.

The 30-stock benchmark Sensex closed 1.71% or 1,352.74 points down at 77,566.16. It crashed to a low of 76,424.55 points in the intra-day.

The wider Nifty50 of NSE ended the day 1.73% or 422.40 points down at 24,028.05 after hitting a low of 23,868.05 points in the intra-day. The Nifty PSU Bank ended 3.97% down.

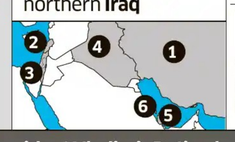
FIIs pulled out $829.9 million from the Indian markets on Monday, taking the cumulative outflow in the current financial year to $6.1 billion.

▸ Oil price, Page 6

## MONDAY'S DEVELOPMENTS

1. Israel launches new "wide-scale" strikes on Tehran, Isfahan and southern Iran
2. Israeli airstrikes hit Beirut's southern suburbs
3. Israel reports one death as blasts rock central Israel
4. Airstrike hit a base belonging to pro-Iran militias in northern Iraq
5. Several explosions heard across Doha; Qatar arrests more than 300 people for sharing images and 'misleading information'
6. Warning sirens sounded in Manama, Bahrain

President Emmanuel Macron says France, allies preparing a "defensive" mission to reopen Strait of Hormuz




- Russian President Vladimir Putin pledges his "unwavering support" to new supreme leader
- Turkey says a ballistic missile fired from Iran intercepted in Turkish airspace
- Ukrain President Zelenskyy says 11 countries approached Kyiv for help on countering Iranian drones

Smoke rises following a strike on the Bapco Oil Refinery in Bahrain on Monday. REUTERS

## B'luru hotels hit by commercial LPG shortage, may shut down

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

Hotels in Bengaluru are facing shortage of commercial LPG cylinders and may be forced to shut down if the supply disruption continues, hoteliers warned on Monday, as the fallout from the conflict in West Asia started showing its effects in India.

Some hoteliers in the city said gas agencies have been denying them cylinders since Monday and most of the hotels may run out of gas to cook in the coming days.

Speaking to *DH*, P C Rao, president of the Bruhat Bengaluru Hotels Association (BBHA), said that hotels will shut down from Tuesday depending on the stock of LPG.

However, several distributors said there were no major disruptions as on Monday.

▸ LPG, Page 6

**If crude prices rise above $120 per barrel, India's oil trade deficit could increase to $220 billion, pushing the current account deficit beyond 3% of GDP and potentially weakening the rupee**

## Khamenei's son is new leader

Iran named hardliner Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei to succeed his late father as supreme leader on Monday, signalling no letup in the war. The secretive 56-year-old cleric has close ties to the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

Details on Page 12

## Raise LPG production: Refineries told

India's petroleum ministry said it issued orders to oil refineries to increase LPG production and to use such extra production to supply the domestic market amid concerns over disruption to supply of cylinders.

## India remains 2nd biggest arms importer

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** India retained its place as the world's second largest importer of arms during 2021-25, but the extent of import has dropped marginally compared to the situation five years ago, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute said on Monday in its latest report.

The world's topmost importer of arms is war-ravaged Ukraine, followed by India, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Pakistan.

Facing Page

# GBA publishes draft electoral roll, B'luru has 88.9L voters

**Number may go up as window to add names still open**

BENGALURU, DHNS

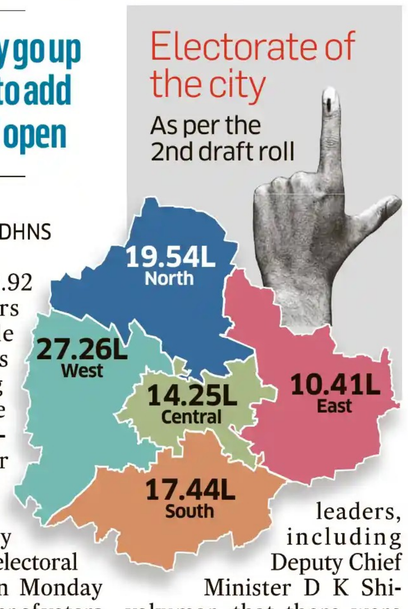
A total of 88.92 lakh voters are eligible to cast their votes in the upcoming elections to the five municipal corporations under the jurisdiction of Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), the draft electoral roll published on Monday shows. The number of voters may go up as the window to enrol new names will be kept open till the date of elections are announced, officials said.

This is the second version of the draft electoral roll. In January, the GBA first published the draft voters' list, which comprised 88.91 lakh electors. The number has gone up by 1,117 as per the revised electoral roll.

Election officials decided to conduct a fresh exercise of re-verifying the roll following complaints from Congress leaders, including Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, that there were serious discrepancies in the January roll. He had also requested suspension of booth-level officers (BLOs) on the charge of deleting names of certain voters.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, GBA Commissioner Maheshwar Rao said no BLO has been suspended so far as an internal inquiry is still going on. He also declined to provide details regarding the specific cases of discrepancies.

▸ GBA, Page 6




## Govt drops plan to build stadium on KSIC land

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Sericulture Minister K Venkatesh announced in the Assembly on Monday that the government will drop its decision to utilise land belonging to the Karnataka Silk Industries Corporation (KSIC) in Mysuru district for building a stadium.

There were protests against the move to allot five acres from KSIC's T Narsipur yarn reeling factory for a stadium. It was feared the proposed allotment would hit KSIC's operations.

"We're dropping it. There was some misguidance by officers who said land was available for a stadium," Venkatesh said. He was responding to Opposition leader R Ashoka, who accused the government of "trying to close down" the KSIC. "The government wants to build a stadium. Won't you find any other piece of land? Is there a lobby that wants to benefit by supplying silk?" Ashoka said.

In a statement later, Ashoka said Venkatesh's announcement was "a clear victory for the workers and all those who stood up to protect KSIC Mysore Silk".

▸ KSIC land, Page 6

## Boy accused of killing hostel mate nabbed

**BALLARI/HUBBALLI, DHNS:** A 15-year-old boy accused of killing a hostel mate and injuring several others at a private residential school in Ballari district was taken into custody on Monday.

He was picked up from the outskirts of the city.

On March 7, between 10 pm and 11 pm, the accused allegedly went on a rampage, killing his roommate.

The condition of one boy remains serious, and he is undergoing treatment in Andhra Pradesh's Kurnool.

Details on Page 6

US urged India to buy Russian oil to ease supply P.12

PG facilities may limit menus, offer food for just another week P.3

OMCs, paint stocks dive amid sharp spike in oil prices P.14

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# 8 feeder buses for three metro stations on Yellow Line

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) on Monday launched eight feeder bus services to improve first- and last-mile connectivity on Namma Metro's Yellow Line.

The following services will connect Hosa Road, Singasandra and Kudlu Gate metro stations with nearby residential and commercial areas: Hosa Road metro station to Hosa Road metro station (ring route) via Central Prison, National Public School, Haralur, Haralur Cross, Agara, Parangipalya, Somasundarapalya, Kudlu Gate and Singasandra.

The first bus departs at 6 am and the last at 9.40 pm.

Hosa Road metro station to Hosa Road metro station (ring route) via Singasandra, Kudlu Gate, Somasundarapalya, Parangipalya, Agara, Bellandur Gate/Haralur Cross, Haralur, National Public School and Central Prison.

The first bus departs at 6.15 am and the last at 9.20 pm.

Hosa Road metro station to Carmelaram bus stop via Central Prison, Doddamara, Chikkanayakanahalli and Doddakanneli.

The first service from Hosa Road metro station is at 6 am and the last at 9 pm.

# GBA zonal commissioners to be appointed as PCPNDT officials

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The state health department will soon appoint zonal commissioners as officials under the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994, in each zone of the Greater Bengaluru Authority.

The zonal commissioner or the additional commissioner will be designated as the Appropriate Authority (AA).

The District Commissioner was also appointed as the District Appropriate Authority (DAA) to head the district-level implementation of the Act.

An eight-member advisory committee will also be constituted to assist the zonal officials. The committee will include a gynecologist, pediatrician, general physician, legal advisor, public representative, and three eminent social workers, preferably women.

## ◆ IN THE CITY ◆

**GENERAL**

**Alumni Website and Office Inauguration:** HC Balakrishna, R Ravindra, A Harish, GK Satyakirthi, HG Balagopal; Vivekananda First Grade College, Rajajinagar; 10 am.

**Bheem Gayana Special Music Programme:** Inauguration by DK Shivakumar, Rizwan Arshad, G Pallavi, G Jagadish, G Ramesh, Naveen Joseph; Organised by Information and Public Relations Department; Dr Manmohan Singh Bangalore City University; 10 am.

**International Women's Day Celebration, Women Agri-Entrepreneur Award Presentation:** Uma Mahadevan, CN Shivaprakash, Venkatarama Reddy J Patil, Elizabeth Cherian, Rupa Vasudevan, K Annapurna, C Bhuvaneshwari, AB Patil; Institution of Agricultural Technologists; 10.30 am.

**Launch of debut works of young writers:** Nagathihalli Chandrashekhar, Satish Kulkarni, BS Manjunathaswamy, Manasa; Kannada Book Authority; Nayana Hall, Kannada Bhavan, JC Road; 11 am.

**Inauguration:** Karnataka State Election Commission logo and official social media platforms; B Veerappa, GS Sangreshi, Suresh K Vantigodi, Sadananda H Hosagoudar; State Election Commission, Ballari Road; 11.30 am.

## ◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

**FORECAST**

Mainly clear sky

**TEMPERATURES**

| | |
|---|---|
| Maximum | 33.0°C |
| Minimum | 20.0°C |
| Rainfall | -- |
| Humidity | 76% |
| Sunset (March 10) | 6:30 pm |
| Sunrise (March 11) | 6:31 am |
| Moonrise | 11:27 pm |
| Moonset | 10:11 am |

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to:
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Please note that hard copies will not be accepted


# EUROPE TOUR

## England & Europe
**16 Days**

England, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Vatican.

Dates: May 5, 26. Jun 9, 23. Jul 14, 28. Aug 11, 25. Sep 15, 29. Oct 13, 27. Nov 10.

1 70222 59008

## Best of Europe
**13 Days**

France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Vatican, Italy.

Dates: May 8, 15, 29. Jun 12, 19, 26. Jul 3, 17, 31. Aug 7, 14, 28. Sep 4, 18, 25.

2 93641 04366

## Beauty of Europe
**9 Days**

France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland.

Dates: May 8, 15, 29. Jun 12, 19, 26. Jul 3, 17, 31. Aug 7, 14, 28. Sep 4, 18, 25.

3 93641 04373

## United Kingdom
**11 Days**

**DUBLIN**, Trinity College. **BELFAST**, Titanic Museum, Ferry from Belfast to Glasgow, **GLASGOW**, **EDINBURGH**, Edinburgh Castle, **LAKE WINDERMERE**, Cruise on Lake Windermere, **MANCHESTER**, **OXFORD**, Oxford University, **LONDON**, Madame Tussauds, Ride on London Eye, Tower of London, Oval Cricket Stadium, Cruise on River Thames.

Dates: May 5, 26. Jun 9, 23. Jul 14, 28. Aug 11, 25. Sep 15, 29. Oct 13, 27. Nov 10.

4 70222 59008

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**K. Nagaraj Adiga**
Founder, Adigas Yatra

## Scandinavia
**10 Days**

**HELSINKI**, Senate Square, Uspensiki Cathedral, Cruise Silja to Stockholm, **STOCKHOLM**, Royal Vasa Ship Museum, City Hall, Drottningholm Palace, **NORWAY IN NUTSHELL**, Ride on the Flamsbana - The most scenic railway journey, Fjord cruise to Copenhagen, **OSLO**, Top of Holmenkollen Ski Jump, Vigeland Sculpture Park, **COPENHAGEN**, The Iconic Little Mermaid.

Dates: May 15, 29. Jun 12, 26. Jul 10, 24. Aug 14, 28. Sep 4, 18.

5 70222 59008

## East Europe
**11 Days**

**MUNICH**, BMW Welt, **BERLIN**, Topography of Terror Museum, Little Big city Berlin, **DRESDEN**, **PRAGUE**, The Charles Bridge, Old Town Square, Czeski Krumlov, **VIENNA**, Schönbrunn Palace, **BRATISLAVA**, **BUDAPEST**, Hungarian Horse Show, Cruise on River Danube, **ZAGREB**, **SLOVEINA**, Ljubljana, Photostop at Lake Bled, **ZELL AM SEE.**

Dates: May 8, 22. Jun 5, 19. Jul 3, 17. Aug 7, 21. Sep 4, 18. Oct 2, 16. Nov 6, 13.

6 93641 04373

## Portugal & Spain
**10 Days**

**LISBON**, Sintra & Cascais, **SEVILLE**, Flamenco Show, **TOLEDO**, Sword Factory, **MADRID**, Santiago Bernabeu, **VALENCIA**, **BARCELONA**, Montjuic Cable Car, Sagrada Family, La Rambla, **MARSEILLES**, **CANNES**, **NICE**, Promenade des Anglais.

Dates: May 8, 22. Jun 5, 19. Jul 3, 17. Aug 7, 21. Sep 4, 18. Oct 2, 16. Nov 6, 13.

7 93641 04366

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**SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

**APPLICATION NOTIFICATION NO. B/C.210/Halt/2025-26/SBC Division, Date: 02.03.2026**

The undersigned on behalf of the President of India, invites sealed applications for appointment of Halt Agent from educated unemployed persons residing in and around the Kempegowda International Airport (KIAD), Someshwar (SMWA) and Jannagatta (GJT) Train Halt station for issuing Unreserved tickets on Commission Basis for a period of five (05) years or till up-gradation of the station whichever is earlier.

| Sl.No. | Halt Station | Section | To Start Function from |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Kempegowda International Airport (KIAD) | Yelahanka | Date will be notified by the Administration |
| 2 | Someshwara (SMWA) | | |
| 3 | Jannagatta (GJT) | | |

Date and time of submission of application From : **10:00 Hrs. to 16:00 Hrs. on 06.04.2026**

For details log on : **www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in**

PUB/966/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26 **Senior Divisional Manager/Bengaluru**

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @sw_railways



**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,**
**पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, बोकारो**
**ई–प्रोक्युरमेंट सूचना**
(एस0बी0डी0 आधारित ई–निविदा)
ई–निविदा प्रसंग संख्या– RCD/BOKARO/310/F.Y. 2025-26
दिनांक–07.03.2026

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | कार्य का नाम | पथ प्रमण्डल, बोकारो अन्तर्गत "नावाडीह से घुटवे हिरक रोड भाया चिरूडीह–मानपुर–तेलो–तरंगा पथ) कुल लम्बाई 22.757 कि0मी0) का चौड़ीकरण एवं मजबूतीकरण/पुनर्निर्माण कार्य (पुलों के निर्माण सहित), वर्ष 2025–26. |
| 2. | प्राक्कलित राशि (रूपये में) | रू0 54,82,62,700.00 (चौवन करोड़ बिरासी लाख बासठ हजार सात सौ) मात्र। |
| 3. | कार्य पूर्ण होने की अवधि | 17(सत्तरह) माह। |
| 4. | वेबसाईट पर निविदा प्रकाशन होने की तिथि एवं समय | 17.03.2026, 12.00 बजे दोपहर तक। |
| 5. | बिड प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय | 06.04.2026, 12.00 बजे दोपहर। |
| 6. | प्री बिड बैठक की तिथि एवं समय | 27.03.2026, 03.00 बजे अपराह्न। |
| 7. | निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले कार्यालय का नाम एवं पता | कार्यपालक अभियंता, पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, बोकारो |
| 8. | प्रोक्युरमेंट पदाधिकारी का सम्पर्क संख्या | 06542–265569 |
| 9. | ई–प्रोक्युरमेंट सेल का हेल्पलाईन संख्या | 0651–2401010 |

नोट :– प्राक्कलित राशि घट बढ़ सकती है।
विस्तृत ब्यौरा के लिए वेबसाईट http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, बोकारो।

PR 374447 Road(25-26)D



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**SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF DIGITAL CBC HEIGHT GAUGE**

**Stores Tender No. PN265147B Dated: 05-03-2026.** E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works:
**Tender No. PN265147B Closing/opening date: 14.30** hrs. on **25-03-2026.**
**Brief Description:** Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Digital CBC height gauge as per Specification attached. Make:- Cee or PIE.
**Quantity:** 40 Nos.
For details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in**

Dy. Chief Matarial Manager/Pandu
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**
*Serving Customers With A Smile*



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Please refer Classifieds on Sunday



**PUBLIC NOTICE - E-AUCTION**
**RELIABLE CASHEW COMPANY PRIVATE LIMITED IN LIQUIDATION (RCCPL)**
**under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016**

**E-AUCTION**
**Sale of Assets under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016**
**Dates E-Auction: 01.04.2026 and 02.04.2026**

Pursuant to the Order of the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Chennai vide its order dated 09.08.2024 in the matter of Reliable Cashew Company Private Limited (In Liquidation), the undersigned is inviting bids for sale of assets owned by RCCPL forming part of the liquidation estate under section 35(f) of IBC, 2016 .The said Assets will be sold on **"AS IS WHERE IS ", "AS IS WHAT IS", "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS" and "NO RECOURSE BASIS".**

The Sale will be done by the undersigned through the E-Auction platform at the web portal https://ibbi.baanknet.com/eauction-ibbi/home Brief particulars of the sale are as follows:

| Set of Assets | Assets | Reserve Price (In INR) | EMD Amount (In INR) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Category A -Sale of Non-core assets (only land parcels)** Date and Time of e-auction: 01.04.2026 at 05.00 PM to 06.00 PM | | |
| **Asset Set 1** | All the piece and parcel of a commercial plot at Sy No. 37-1, measuring 65.50 cents situated in Marakada Village, Mangaluru Taluk within Mangaluru City Corporation in the Registration Sub-district of Mangaluru, Karnataka | **78 Lakhs** | **7.80 Lakhs** |
| **Asset Set 2** | All the piece and parcel of a commercial plot at R.S.No.110/3, measuring 3.17 Acres situated in Bramhawar, Udupi | **2.25 Crores** | **0.225 Crores** |
| | **Category B Sale of Movable Assets at leased premises** Date and Time of e-auction: 02.04.2026 at 11.00 AM to 12.00 Noon | | |
| **Asset Set 3** | Plant and Machinery together with a Vehicle located at D. No, 12/92 and 12/93, Padavu Post, Shakti Nagar, Kulshekar, Mangaluru, Karnataka | **36.00 Lakhs** | **3.60 Lakhs** |
| | **Category C Sale of assets individual units (Movable and immovable properties)** Date and Time of e-auction: 02.04.2026 at 01.00 PM to 02.00 PM | | |
| **Asset Set 4** | **Industrial Property** (Movable and immovable assets) All the piece and parcels of the land measuring 100 cents, situated at, S.No.291/9P1, Kolalgiri, Uppoor Village, Udupi Taluk, Karnataka together with building, plant and machinery, furniture & fixtures, and vehicles. | **1.71 Crores** | **0.171 Crores** |
| | **Category D-Sale of movable Assets (In case no bids are received for auction under Asset Set 4)** Date and Time of e-auction: 02.04.2026 at 03.00 PM to 04.00 PM | | |
| **Asset Set 5** | **Machineries and movable Assets** Machineries at S.No.291/9P1, Kolalgiri, Uppoor Village, Udupi Taluk, Karnataka along with all movable assets and vehicles | **23.00 Lakhs** | **2.30 Lakhs** |
| | **Category E Sale of Immovable Assets (E-auction only if Asset set 5 gets bids and results in a successful auction)** Date and Time of e-auction: 02.04.2026 at 05.00 PM to 06.00 PM | | |
| **Asset Set 6** | **Immovable Asset (Land & Building)** All the piece and parcels of the land measuring 100 cents, situated at, S.No.291/9P1, Kolalgiri, Uppoor Village, Udupi Taluk , Karnataka together with building | **1.48 Crores** | **0.148 Crores** |

1. This Sale Notice shall be read with the Complete 'e-Auction Process Information Document' (Process Document) containing details of the Assets, eligibility, E-Auction Bid Form etc which is available at https://ibbi.baanknet.com/eauction-ibbi/home or can contact the Liquidator for further details.
2. Interested bidders for the respective Category(ies) and/or Set of Asset(s) are required to submit the eligibility documents and EMD on or before **30.03.2026** as provided in the Process Document through the electronic platform only
3. The Liquidator reserves the right to amend the key terms of the sale process including timelines for any or all Category(ies) and/or Set of Assets(s) being sold in the e-auction, to the extent permissible under the applicable laws and regulations. Any information about the amendments/ extensions of any of the timelines with respect to the sale process timelines for any or all category(ies) and/or Set of Assets (s) will be available on the e-auction website and communicated to the Eligible/Qualified/Successful Bidder(s).
4. Prospective bidders shall deposit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) through the Baanknet auction platform only. If the bidder is found ineligible, EMD shall be liable to be forfeited.

Nothing contained herein shall constitute a binding offer or commitment for sale of assets of the Company including Sale of the Company.

Please scan the QR code below to download a Teaser Document.

Date: 09.03.2026
Place: Bengaluru

Sd/-
Ravindra Beleyur
Liquidator
Reliable Cashew Company Private Limited in Liquidation
'428,19th B Cross, 3rd Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru 11
email:Reliable_Cashew_CIRP@beleyur.com
Phone: 080 26540193 Mobile: +91 94481 46963



**Rail Wheel Plant/Bela**
**(Distt.: Saran), Bihar-841221**

**E-Open Tender Notice No.:- S/RWP/E/2025-26/21, dated : 06.03.2026.**
Principal Chief Materials Manager /Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the President of India invites **online "e-Open Tender",** through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website **www.ireps.gov.in,** for supply of following Stores item at RWP/Bela. The Closing time of all tenders is 14:00 hrs. **Sl.No. 1, Tender No.** 02245265A, **Short Description of item :** Design, Supply, installation, Commissioning & Training of Stamping Machine , **Quantity :** 01 Nos, **Date of Tender Closing/Opening :** 27.03.2026 at 14:00 Hrs. **Sl.No. 2, Tender No.** 01265031, **Short Description of item :** Side and Intermediate wall Pannel, **Quantity** : 01 Set, **Date of Tender Closing/Opening :** 27.03.2026 at 14:00 Hrs., **Sl.No. 3, Tender No.** 01251134B, **Short Description of item :** Grinding Wheel Eutectic based Alumina, **Quantity** : 250 Nos., **Date of Tender Closing/Opening :** 27.03.2026 at 14:00 Hrs., **Sl.No. 4, Tender No.** 01251028B, **Short Description of item :** Silico Managanese, **Quantity** : 369326 Kgs., **Date of Tender Closing/Opening** : 26.03.2026 at 14:00 Hrs., **Sl.No. 5, Tender No.** 00251029B, **Short Description of item :** Ferro Managanese, **Quantity** : 474112 Kgs., **Date of Tender Closing/Opening** : 26.03.2026 at 14:00 Hrs. **1.** Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is **www.ireps.gov.in 2.** The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including **Addendum/ Corrigendum/ Cancellation** with respect to the above tender.

PCMM, Rail Wheel Plant, Bela
**RWP/CPRO/Advt./2025-26/115**



**S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER**

**Tender Notice No. : e-Tender/2026/09, dated 06.03.2026.** e-Tenders are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), S.E.Railway, Kharagpur-721301 for and on behalf of the President of India for the following works **before 15.00 hrs.** on the date mentioned against items and will be **opened at 15.30 hrs. : Sl. No. & Tender No.; Description of work; Tender Value; Earnest Money : (1) E-KGP-South-06-2026;** Construction of new 3.0 Mtr. wide Foot Over Bridge in lieu of existing old Foot Over Bridge at Haldipada, Ranital, Basta, Benapur & Lakshannath Road and extension of existing 3.0 Mtr. wide Foot Over Bridge to connect Platform No. 3/4 at Bakhrabad station under the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer (South)/ Kharagpur; ₹ 23,45,67,795.28; ₹ 13,22,800/-. **(2) E-KGP-WEST-07-2026;** Kharagpur : Improvement & standardization of overrun line, dead end & sand hump under Assistant Divisional Engineer/West/ Kharagpur. (4th call); ₹ 1,37,02,424.13; ₹ 2,18,500/-. **(3) E-KGP-South-07-2026;** Execution of the work of : (i) Cess repair & strengthening of bank under Sr. Section Engineer/P.Way/Hijli and construction of central drain in between Belda-Nekurseni under Sr. Section Engineer/P.Way/Dantan, (ii) Augmentation facilities in RGM siding at Hijli & Dantan under Assistant Divisional Engineer (South)/Kharagpur. (2nd Call); ₹ 2,94,81,164.17; ₹ 2,97,400/-. **Tender Document Cost :** 0.00 for each. **Date of opening :** 19.03.2026 for Sl. No. 1, 27.03.2026 for sl. no. 2 and 02.04.2026 for Sl. No. 3. **Completion period of the work:** 18 Months for sl. no. 1 & 3 and 12 Months for Sl. No. 2. **Bidding start Date :** From 05.03.2026 and upto 15.00 hrs. on 19.03.2026 for Sl. No.1; From 13.03.2026 and upto 15.00 hrs. on 27.03.2026 for Sl. No.2 and From 19.03.2026 and upto 15.00 hrs. on 02.04.2026 for Sl. No.3. Interested Tenderers may visit website **www.ireps.gov.in** for full details/descriptions/ specifications of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these works will be accepted. **N.B.** Prospective bidders may regularly visit **"www.ireps. gov.in"** to participate in all tenders. **(PR-1276)**

## Labourer dies after brick falls on his head at construction site on IISc campus

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** A 34-year-old worker died after a cement brick fell on his head from the ninth floor of an under-construction building at the IISc campus on CV Raman Road.

The deceased, Upendra Oraon from West Bengal, had been working as a helper at the site for several months.

Police said the incident occurred on Saturday afternoon. Upendra was working at the site when a cement brick fell on his head, causing severe injuries.

He was shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment, where doctors declared him dead.

His brother Kaluyu Oraon approached the Sadashivanagar police and filed a complaint, alleging negligence by the contractor and a private construction company.

The body was handed over to the family on Sunday after the postmortem. Further investigation is on. Police said preliminary inquiry showed there were no safety measures at the construction site.

## Woman kills self; police book husband, in-laws for dowry harassment

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** A 27-year-old private company employee died by suicide at her house in Hennur on Sunday.

The deceased, Supritha from Horamavu, was married to realtor Kiran Kumar five years ago. The couple has a three-year-old child.

A senior police officer said Supritha was alone at home when the incident occurred.

Her body was found hanging in a room in the house and the family alerted the Hennur police, who rushed to the spot and sent the body for postmortem.

Based on a complaint filed by the victim's mother Tejavathi V, police registered a case of dowry harassment against Kumar and his parents. She has also alleged foul play in her daughter's death.

## Change in Vande Bharat timings

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The timings of these Vande Bharat trains will be revised from March 15:

**Train 20661 KSR Bengaluru–Dharwad:** Davangere (9.30 am/9.32 am), Haveri (10.20 am/10.22 am), and Hubballi (11.15 am/11.20 am).

**Train number 20662 Dharwad–KSR Bengaluru:** Haveri (2.48 pm/2.50 pm), Davangere (3.33 pm/3.35 pm), and Yeshwantpur 7.21 pm/7.23 pm.

# PG facilities may limit menus, offer food for just another week

### Urgent meeting today to discuss the way forward

BENGALURU, DHNS

While many restaurants in Bengaluru may shut from Tuesday due to a shortage of commercial LPG cylinders, paying guest (PG) facility owners have warned that they can ensure uninterrupted food supply to residents for only about a week if the crisis continues.

Some facilities have already begun limiting their menus, while the PG Owners' Welfare Association Bengaluru has called an urgent meeting on Tuesday to chart the next course of action.

Bengaluru has an estimated 15,000 PG facilities housing more than 10 lakh people — from professionals in formal jobs to blue-collar workers. These facilities provide food to residents three times a day.

"We have called an urgent meeting tomorrow to decide the way forward. We can run our kitchens for about a week at most, but after that food supply will likely be hit. The government must find a solution to this crisis. Food is served three times a day and residents also require hot water almost daily. The LPG shortage will hit us hard," association president Arun Kumar DT told *DH*.

**'Induction not feasible'**

Kumar said induction cooktops cannot substitute LPG stoves as they are unsuitable for bulk cooking. "We serve at least 50 people per meal. We cannot stock cylinders as it is a safety concern. We operate with at least three cylinders at any point in time," he added.

Mahindra Raju, who runs Raj Mahal PG with more than 12 branches across Bengaluru, said residents are usually served three to four varieties of food for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

"We will not be able to sustain for more than three to four days if this continues. We have six empty cylinders as of today. We tried booking them, but couldn't get any slot. As a first step to combat the crisis, we have decided to limit our menu. This will help us extend food services and give us time to look for alternatives," he said.

**LPG SHORTAGE**

**ARUN KUMAR DT**
President, PG Owners' Welfare Association (Bengaluru)

"The government must find a solution to this crisis. Food is served three times a day and residents also require hot water almost daily. The LPG shortage will hit us hard.

### Auto gas, CNG unaffected

A GAIL India official said the supply of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) to households, commercial establishments and industries, as well as Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for cars and autorickshaws, will not be affected in Bengaluru or Karnataka for now.

However, if the crisis continues in the coming days, industries and commercial establishments will be the first to see their supplies hit.

# Lokayukta, Upa Lokayuktas inspect lakes, waste facilities

BENGALURU, DHNS

Lokayukta Justice BS Patil and Upa Lokayuktas Justice KN Phaneendra and Justice B Veerappa on Monday inspected lakes and waste facilities following complaints from the public.

Officials from the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), and Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML) accompanied them.

Justice Patil visited Sompura Lake in Banashankari 6th Stage and the waste processing plant at Lingadheeranahalli. He also reviewed work on a sewage treatment plant being built by the BWSSB.

BWSSB Chairman Ram Prasath Manohar told the Lokayukta that the plant, once operational, will stop sewage from flowing into the lake.

At the Lingadheeranahalli plant, the Lokayukta spoke to residents who had complained about foul smell, flies and leachate water flowing out of the waste facility. Justice Patil pulled up BSWML officials for the unscientific maintenance of the plant.

While returning, the Lokayukta noticed garbage blackspots on the road. He directed BSWML officials to remove them and submit an action report within three days.

Lokayukta Justice BS Patil on inspection rounds on Monday.

Meanwhile, Justice Phaneendra inspected Doddabidarakallu Lake, Narasappanahalli Lake in Peenya and the surrounding areas. He noticed debris dumped near the lake and permanent structures within the lake boundary. Domestic and industrial effluents were also seen flowing into the lake.

He directed officials to ensure the lake stayed pollution-free, while also ordering to remove abandoned vehicles parked in the lake buffer zone. Justice Phaneendra also found litter in lakes along Magadi Road.

Justice Veerappa, who inspected Kaggadasapura Lake in CV Raman Nagar, found the lake buffer zone unprotected. He objected to the construction of a sewage treatment plant within the buffer zone.

During the inspection, he also noticed garbage blackspots in and around Malleshpalya, Thippasandra, BEML and HAL. He found garbage dumped in the rajakaluve in front of the police quarters in Austin Town.

The Upa Lokayukta noticed weeds, fallen branches and other debris dumped in the stormwater drain near NGV in Koramangala, obstructing the flow of water, leading to mosquito breeding and foul conditions. They directed engineers to fix these issues.

**Key concerns flagged**

- Untreated sewage entering Sompura Lake
- Foul smell, flies and leachate reported at Lingadheeranahalli facility; BSWML pulled up
- Roadside dumping spots found at several locations
- Debris dumping and effluents seen at Doddabidarakallu and Narasappanahalli lakes
- Concerns over unprotected buffer zone and STP work near Kaggadasapura Lake
- Debris clogging stormwater drains in Koramangala, causing stagnation and mosquito breeding

## Area sabhas best way to clean up blackspots: BNP

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Micro-infrastructure and behavioural hurdles prevent residents from effectively using the door-to-door system, an audit of Bengaluru's waste collection system has found.

The audit also noted issues like mismatch of collection hours when residents are away, fear of stray dogs tearing open bags left outside, and restrictive rules by landlords in rental properties.

Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP), which released the audit report from its 'Follow the Garbage' campaign, also challenges the long-held public perception that blackspots are primarily due to poor waste collection, blaming it instead on the lack of decentralised citizen participation.

"This audit findings suggest that dumping isn't always a sign of negligence, but rather a sign of a system that has not evolved to meet the needs of a working-class neighbourhood," said BNP founder Srikanth Narasimhan.

"Cleaning a blackspot is merely a temporary fix. The only permanent solution is the formal constitution of area sabhas. By institutionalising area sabhas, we can move from reactive to proactive action through community-led governance that fixes the issue permanently," he added.

## From 400 to 260, GBA reduces compactors transporting waste to landfills

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The GBA said the number of compactors transporting waste to landfills has dropped from 400 to 260 as recycling improves in the city. It added that about 45 to 50 per cent of the total waste is being recycled.

The authority plans to implement an integrated solid waste management facility in the next three to four years.

After inaugurating a programme organised by the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML), GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao urged officials to improve performance and expressed hope that Bengaluru will secure a higher ranking in the Swachh Survekshan campaign.

"Around 95 per cent waste segregation is being achieved in Rajajinagar. Similar efforts must be taken up in other constituencies," he said. "The transfer station at Chamarajpet is functioning well."

He said organic waste will be composted at source, plastic waste will be sent to power plants, and low value plastic (RDF) will be supplied to cement factories. "By adopting such methods, we will gradually reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills."

Padma Shri awardee Dr Manjamma Jogati, film actor Aniruddh Jatkar, head of India Rising Trust Arun Pai, social worker KM Nagaraj, head of 'Let's Be the Change' Aniruddh Dutt, and social activist Abhilash Nair were appointed ambassadors for Swachh Survekshan 2025-26.

During the programme, 10 people, including citizens, supervisors and pourakarmikas, were honoured as 'Swachhata Champions'.

Gopal's family members and relatives staged a protest outside the Anekal police station on Sunday, demanding the immediate arrest of all those involved.

# Realtor kidnapped from Anekal murdered in TN

### Former partner arrested in suspected Rs 25-lakh contract killing

BENGALURU, DHNS

A real-estate agent from Anekal, who was allegedly kidnapped on Sunday, was found murdered in Tamil Nadu on Monday.

Police have taken his former business partner into custody.

Gopal alias Gopi, a resident of Honnakalasapura near Anekal, was allegedly abducted by a gang that intercepted his car near Karpur Gate. The assailants rammed his car from the rear and forcibly took him away in another car.

Gopal, the victim.

He was taken to a forest area near Denkanikottai in Tamil Nadu, where sharp weapons were used to hack him to death. A police officer involved in the investigation said the body was found on Monday.

"Around 5 pm on Sunday, we were returning home in our car when a speeding vehicle rammed us from behind near Karpur Gate. When I got down to check, three men from a white car got out and suddenly sprayed pepper spray in my eyes. They forcibly abducted Gopal and fled. I later washed my eyes and immediately went to the Anekal police station to lodge a complaint," Satish K, Gopal's cousin, stated in his complaint.

Following the incident, Gopal's family members and relatives staged a protest outside the Anekal police station, demanding the immediate arrest of all those involved. Police brought the situation under control after tension gripped the area for a while.

Preliminary investigation suggests the murder was planned by Gopal's former business partner Mohan Babu, who allegedly hired assailants by offering a Rs 25-lakh contract to eliminate him, the officer said.

Police have taken Babu and two of his associates into custody.

**Business disputes**

During interrogation, Babu reportedly told police that he and Gopal were business partners, but developed disagreements over financial matters, which allegedly led him to plot the murder. Gopal had been involved in real estate and financial dealings for several years.

## Online modelling offer spirals into morphing threat for woman

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** An online modelling offer turned into a nightmare for a woman who alleged she was threatened with morphed photographs, police said on Monday.

In her complaint, the 44-year-old woman from Benson Town said unknown people contacted her on Instagram on March 3, claiming to represent a jewellery brand. They asked her to share photographs for a modelling assignment.

The complainant also sent them Rs 25,000 as charges.

She later found that several fake accounts had been created in the name of her daughter, where the complainant's obscenely edited photographs were circulated.

Police registered a case under relevant sections of the Information Technology Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Further investigation is on.

## 50-year-old man found dead near railway tracks; suicide suspected

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** A 50-year-old man was found dead near the railway tracks between Lottegollahalli and Hebbal stations in northern Bengaluru on Sunday.

Police suspect suicide as the deceased had run up heavy debts. The deceased, Venkatesh V from Srirampura, had invested in the stock market and suffered heavy losses.

He had also taken loans and suffered from health issues.

(L-R) Sindhu MM, Coordinator, IQAC; Maj Dr Anandappa Iramukhadavar, Principal, Seshadripuram College; K Krishnaswamy, Trustee; Dr Anupam Tyagi, Professor of Economics, Alliance University; Dr Wooday P Krishna, Honorary General Secretary, Seshadripuram Educational Trust; MS Nataraj, Chairman, Governing Council; Shobha U, Convenor, Conference Committee; and Dr Hemalatha P, Convenor, Anveshana Research Cell, at the conference.

## International conference on tradition and transformation

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Seshadripuram College, in association with IQAC, Conference Committee, Anveshana Research and Development Cell, and PRIMAX Foundation, organised a one-day multidisciplinary international conference titled 'Tradition × Transformation: Knowledge, Technology and Inclusive Futures' on Friday.

The conference gathered scholars and researchers to discuss the link between tradition and transformation in today's academic and social context, with over 250 participants presenting papers on literature, culture, digital transformation, and social perspectives.

**SAFE PASSAGE**

# Elephants, leopards use wildlife overpass linking Devika Rani Estate, BM Kaval

BENGALURU, DHNS

Four years after an elephant was killed while crossing NH 209 near Roerich Devika Rani Estate, a wildlife overpass built recently is now being used by elephants and leopards.

Forest officials said the development shows wildlife crossings must be part of highway projects rather than an afterthought.

In 2017, forest officials had warned the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) that widening Kanakapura Road without adequate overpasses for wildlife movement between Devika Rani Estate and BM Kaval could lead to problems.

In March 2022, an elephant crossing the widened road died after being hit by a BMTC bus.

The 40-metre overpass was completed in 2023, while associated works to recreate a natural landscape were finished towards the end of 2024.

Officials earlier had no confirmation on whether animals were using the structure, which allows movement into the BM Kaval forest spread over 1,000 acres.

An elephant and a leopard cross the NH 209 overpass.

The department later installed a camera trap and found that in the early hours of Sunday, a leopard and a male elephant used the overpass to move towards the BM Kaval forest. The forest earlier served as a stopover along the Savandurga corridor.

An official said the lack of safe passages can alter elephant behaviour and may trigger aggression. "Restoring a corridor is important for conservation of wildlife and to avoid threats faced by the people in the area or damage to property," he said.

# State betters child marriage prevention rate in three years

## Records 78.64% prevention in 2025, but concerns remain

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

The rate of preventing child marriages in Karnataka has consistently improved over the last three years, with 2025 witnessing a 78.64% prevention, according to data from the Directorate of Child Protection.

As per the data, there were 3,044 complaints, and child marriage was prevented in 2,394 cases (78.64%).

This is higher than the corresponding figures in 2024 - 3,127 cases, where marriage was prevented in 2,323 cases (74.28%) and 2023 - 2,605 cases, where marriage was prevented in 1,775 cases (68.13%).

However, those 21.36% of child marriages is very concerning, even though FIRs have been lodged in all such cases of child marriage (FIRs were also filed in all other cases in 2023 and 24 where child marriage had taken place).

Officials from the directorate of child protection told *DH* that the cases of child marriage which were difficult to prevent are the ones where the marriage would've already occurred and only detected by doctors at the time of pregnancy.

While Belagavi saw the highest number of complaints amongst all districts in 2025 (260), it was Mysuru at the same spot in 2024 (275) and in 2023 (226).

A meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh on September 1, 2025, had noted that family problems, excessive use of social media, rise in child marriages, social customs and lack of education amongst girls were the main reasons for underage pregnancy, says a joint circular issued by seven departments.

Dr N V Vasudeva Sharma, the executive director of Child Rights Trust, explained that the onus of preventing all cases of child marriage lies with the government.

"They have Anganawadi, health workers and a women and child protection committee. Do they exist only on paper? How's it that NGOs are aware of child marriage and lodge complaints?"

Sharma explained that in cases where there had already been marriages, the government should at least advice the underage couple to refrain from childbirth.

Contact 1198 or 112 helpline numbers in case of any emergency related to the protection of children.

**BETTERING RECORD**

| Year | No of complaints | Preventions | FIRs lodged |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2023 | 2,605 | 1,775 | 830 |
| 2024 | 3,127 | 2,323 | 804 |
| 2025 | 3,044 | 2,394 | 650 |

### 'Three-pronged approach to curb social evil'

**Dr Sneha C V, the director of the Directorate of Child Protection, pointed out that the government was taking a three-pronged approach to prevent child marriages.**

**"Firstly, we try to prevent child marriages through awareness. In districts where comparative prevalence is higher, where child marriage is common, we have initiated campaigns on its problems. We have also prepared a video on child marriage prevention."**

**The director explained that in cases where there had already been child marriage, the second step of protection would be provided to the girl, ensuring that she gets education and vocational training and even jobs.**

**She noted that the third phase was prosecution, where cases would be taken up with the help of district legal services authority.**

# Cong MLAs urge CM to fight for central funds legally

## Legislators flag serious dearth of development funds

BENGALURU, DHNS

Congress legislators on Monday urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to fight for the central grants and the state's 'fair' share in the GST collection legally, citing serious dearth of development funds, ahead of the local body elections.

MLC Ramesh Babu asked how Karnataka could secure its due fair share in GST collections.

MLA Konareddy stated that if Centre fails to release funds, Law Minister H K Patil and CM's legal advisor should pursue it legally. "MLAs need funds, especially with local body polls fast approaching," said Reddy.

"BJP-ruled states are in majority in GST council. So, we are examining legal options. Earlier too, the Karnataka government had got its dues – Rs 3,000 crore as drought relief from the Centre after a legal fight," recalled Siddaramaiah, on Monday, who held an interaction with legislators to explain the basics of the state budget and fiscal management, while countering Opposition allegations that Karnataka is being run on excessive borrowings.

Siddaramaiah said the state has maintained fiscal discipline despite financial constraints and declining grants from the Centre. The Fiscal Responsibility Act mandates fiscal deficit remain within 3% of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and public debt within 25% of GSDP.

"Total borrowings this year stand at Rs 1.32 lakh crore, the state's outstanding debt is Rs 8.24 lakh crore. The fiscal deficit is 2.94% of GSDP, and debt 24.94% of GSDP. The previous budgets had revenue surplus, but the state recorded revenue deficit of Rs 19,000 crore last year and is projected at Rs 22,000 crore next year due to GST rate rationalisation which has led to GST growth to slide from 10% to 4%. Also, GST compensation to states was discontinued after 2022, and central funding for schemes reduced," said Siddaramaiah.

The MLAs sought to know how to counter the BJP's criticism of huge debts to run the flagship guarantee schemes. "The Centre's debt burden was Rs 53 lakh crore during Manmohan Singh government and the debt increased to Rs 218 lakh crore under the Modi government, a hike of Rs 165 lakh crore. The central debt is 55.6% of GDP and the state's is 24.94% of GSDP. Also, the state's debt rose from Rs 2.45 lakh crore in 2022 to Rs 5.22 lakh crore by 2023 as the BJP government also borrowed heavily," said Siddaramaiah.

Dr Ranganath suggested more borrowings to give funds to MLAs noting that BJP government too had exceeded the cap citing pandemic. Siddaramaiah said the state could not decide unilaterally.

The CM stated Karnataka's GSDP growth was estimated at 8.1%, higher than the national GDP growth rate of 7.4%.

On declining tax devolution, CM said, 4.7% share by 14th FC was reduced to 3.6% and 4.13%. We contributed Rs 4.5 lakh crore as taxes but received only Rs 60,000 crore this year, and can expect Rs 73,000 crore next year. Out of every rupee paid in taxes, we get back only 15 paise," he said.

"This is not a political issue. Several states feel aggrieved and it is my duty to admit that," he said.

**Lawmakers take part in a training camp on budget revenues, grant allocation and classification, in Bengaluru on Monday.** DH PHOTO/PRASHANTH H G

## Omni on fire, man burnt alive

**BAGEPALLI (CHIKKABALLAPUR DISTRICT), DHNS:** A man was burnt alive after a Maruthi Omni he was travelling caught a fire near Balareddypalli village of Bagepalli taluk on Sunday night.

The deceased was identified as Udaykumar (65). It is said that Udaykumar visited his mother in Balareddypalli on Sunday noon and was returning to Bengaluru when an electrical short triggered fire in the Omni. Local residents informed the police about the vehicle being on fire.

The personnel from Fire and Emergency Services rushed to the spot and doused the fire.

Senior police officers visited the spot.

# Join in to raise enrollment at govt schools, Madhu urges legislators

BENGALURU, DHNS

School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa on Monday appealed to the legislators to join the department in its drive to increase enrollment at government schools.

While discussing government schools' quality during the Zero Hour in the Legislative Council, Madhu urged all legislators to promote government schools.

"Government schools have the best teachers, we provide free uniforms, books, food, milk and eggs. Even the quality is improving with Karnataka Public Schools and we also offer English Medium education. I want all legislators to join the ongoing admission campaign," Madhu said.

The minister informed the Council that this year, to avoid any academic disturbances, the department had decided to complete the Teachers Transfers Counselling before June.

"Every year, transfer process goes on till December. From this year, we will complete the transfer process at least by June, which is before the commencement of classes for the 2026-27 academic year," Madhu added.

Talking about excess teachers, the minister said that an excess teachers list would be readied first and soon after the deployment of excess teachers, a transfer counseling schedule will be released.

The minister has also decided to write to all teachers and School Development and Monitoring Committees (SDMC) requesting to strengthen the enrollment drive at the local level.

This year, considering the declining admissions at government schools and to compete with the private unaided schools, the department has started the admission drive for government schools from November 2025 and it will go on till June 2026.

For the first time, the department had conducted a parent-teacher Meeting on November 14 last year and was also trying to reach the public through brochures and advertisements at the local level.

**School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa makes a point in the Legislative Council on Monday.** DH PHOTO/RANJU P

## No shortage of power in state, says George

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Energy Minister K J George on Monday assured the Legislative Council that there will be no power shortage in Karnataka.

Replying to the issue raised during Zero Hour in the Council, the minister stated that there was no shortage of power as of now and also claimed there will not be any shortage during summer this year.

**K J George**

"We are getting power from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and even from Central grids. There is no shortage of power in the state," George added.

Meanwhile, the minister also clarified on the allegations leveled against him for purchasing transformers from neighbouring Kerala despite having Karnataka Vidyuth Karkhane (KaViKa) in the state, which manufactures transformers.

Replying to the question by BJP MLC N Ravi Kumar, George said, "KaViKa can manufacture only 30,000 transformers, but our demand is for 50,000. KaViKa was in financial distress and we helped it and pushed its manufacturing capacity from 15,000 to 30,000."

On Ravikumar accusing the minister of purchasing transformers from Kerala to manage that state's election expenses, he said, "these allegations are baseless."

George even informed the House that not just Congress government but past governments, including that of BJP, too had purchased transformers from neighboring states.

According to the minister, the finance department was yet to give approval for 4g exemption, under the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act, to purchase transformers directly from Kerala.

"If the Finance Department refuses to give approval for the 4g exemption, then we will proceed with the tender," he said.

### SNIPPETS

## Plots for veterans this year: KBG

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Ex-Army personnel will be allotted sites under their quota by the end of this year, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda told the Assembly on Monday. Gowda was replying to a question by Harihar BJP MLA B P Harish.

**Krishna Byre Gowda**

"In Davangere district, 338 ex-soldiers have applied for sites. The government has already announced that ex-Army personnel will be allotted sites on the basis of eligibility. Officials have been directed to identify habitable land," Gowda said.

## BJP MLA flags 'Question Chori'

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Karkala BJP MLA V Sunil Kumar said state-based questions raised by Opposition lawmakers are not being 'starred' and urged Speaker U T Khader to correct this. "We've asked questions that are relevant to entire state and not just our constituencies. But such questions are not being picked as 'starred' questions. Therefore, these questions don't get discussed. Is there a Question Chori going on?" he said. Opposition MLAs also asked Khader not to limit the number of calling-attention motions. Khader said only 15 motions will be taken up daily, which was met with resistance.

## 'Committed to relocate families living inside Kudremukh park'

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Reiterating the state government's commitment to relocate families living inside the Kudremukh National Park, Forest and Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre on Monday said it would expedite the relocation of the remaining families, subject to availability of funds.

Responding to a calling attention motion by BJP MLC Shantaram Budna Siddi in the Legislative Council, Khandre clarified that 314 families were yet to be relocated from the national park. The minister said that out of the 1,382 families residing inside Kudremukh National Park, 670 families had consented for voluntary relocation. "Out of these, 356 families have already been paid Rs 142 crore as compensation and another 314 families still need to be relocated. The government has already valued immovable properties of 76 families through and very soon they will be provided compensation subject to availability of funds," the minister clarified.

## Many promotee IAS officers reluctant to attend Mussoorie training: MLC

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Most of the KAS officers, who are promoted to IAS cadre, are reluctant to attend the mandatory administrative training at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie.

Senior Congress MLC Ramesh Babu raised this issue in the Council, terming it a matter of public importance and urging the state government to take corrective measures.

Babu told the House that only one of the 26 promoted KAS officers attended the mandatory training, this year.

"Nearly 96% of state service officers promoted to the IAS since 2016 have skipped the mandatory training at Mussoorie academy. How will they understand the administrative structure and responsibilities? The chief minister must intervene and insist the officials on attending the training programme," Babu urged.

Meanwhile, some of the officers who were supposed to attend the training told *DH* that it is difficult for them to get approval for the same from their higher ups. Interestingly, the department heads say that many chose not to attend the training because of the fear of losing the posts/positions they are having now.

The 128th induction programme is underway at LBSNAA. It is a six-week training programme, which started on February 2, includes four weeks of in-house training and two weeks of study tour.

Among 26 promotee IAS officers, seven officers were elevated to IAS cadre in 2016, two in 2018, four in 2019, eight in 2020 batch, three in 2021, and two in 2022.

# DHOs told to purchase medicines from AbArK funds

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Health department has directed the district health officers (DHOs) to purchase medicines from ABArK scheme funds and Arogya Raksha Samiti funds to address the shortage of medicines.

The order also stated that if the medical superintendents of the hospitals refuse to use the funds and procure medicines locally, they will face legal action under the Karnataka Civil Services Rules (KCSR).

The issue was also raised in the Legislative Council by Dr Dhananjay Sarji. Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao replied that the steps have been initiated through the Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (KSMCL) since last August.

He said that earlier, many medicines were being distributed without proper quality checks and there were instances where drugs with low usage were procured in large quantities. Now, the government has shifted its focus to procuring medicines that are actually required, he added. "We have studied procurement models followed by other states. For example, Tamil Nadu has a very streamlined drug procurement system. Earlier, unnecessary conditions in our tenders discouraged bidders. Now we are assessing the exact requirement of medicines and conducting the tender process through a transparent system," he said.

He added that medicines procured are tested once again at warehouses to ensure quality before distribution. "This process has caused some delay," he noted.

Under the ABArK scheme, around Rs 300 crore is available across districts. Additionally, Rs 30 crore has been released and districts have been instructed to procure medicines locally if required.

The minister also said that an IAS officer has been appointed as managing director of KSMCL to streamline the functioning of the corporation.


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I,MUKUNDA RAMAPPA Residing at No.13, 14/4.5, 6th Cross, Ramappa Layout, Behind Government School, Puttenahalli J.P.Nagar 7th Phase Bengaluru-560078 have changed my Name to R MUKUNDA RAJ vide Affidavit Dtd:18.02.2026 Sworn Before Notary S.Vijayakumar, Bangalore

I, SAFI Ulla Mohammed Amjad Pasha S/o Mohammed Shafi Ulla aged about 57 Years, resident of #537, Poolsha Mohalla Kolar 563101. Have changed my name to Mohammed Amjad Pasha vide affidavit dated 09.03.2026 Before Notary Bisappa Gowda Kolar. Henceforth I shall be called as Mohammed Amjad Pasha only.

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# Loss of business leaves airport taxi drivers in quandary

## Say completing two trips per day has become a challenge

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

The week-long slump in international arrivals and the unchecked menace of unauthorised taxi aggregators have left airport taxi drivers staring at mounting losses.

The once-bustling taxi lines at the airport now wear a deserted look. "The movement of cabs has come to a standstill. It takes nearly four hours for the existing fleet to get a single trip," Mallikarjun, a cab driver at the Kempegowda International Airport, said.

The impact on daily earnings has been drastic. In a standard 24-hour shift, a driver could previously manage three to five duties (trips). Now, completing even two trips has become a challenge. "The cars are just gathering dust in the buffer parking lots. Unless the walkie-talkie buzzes with a message of a passenger arrival, twenty to twenty-five cars remain idle for hours," an other driver said.

Taxies wait in a long queue at Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru on Monday. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

The primary grievance of the official airport taxi drivers is the rise of unauthorised operators who intercept passengers right at the arrival gates. These drivers lure commuters with lower fares, often cutting the official rates by nearly 40%-50%.

"If a trip to Jayanagar costs Rs 1,500 in an official airport taxi, these unauthorised operators offer a shared deal for as low as Rs 800. Naturally, a customer will choose the cheaper option". He alleged that while Terminal 1 is already struggling with this issue, the problem has now seeped into the Terminal 2 as well..

Beyond the competition from app-based aggregators like Ola and Uber, who operate from designated basements, KSTDC drivers feel sidelined by the powers that be. There is a growing sentiment of resentment regarding the lack of respect and priority given to local Kannada-speaking drivers. "We feel like outsiders in our own state. Private companies are being favoured, and the local drivers, who have served this airport for years, are losing their dignity and their livelihood," the drivers added.

Cab drivers also say that they have loans to pay up and unless they clock in the required trips in a day, they don't make enough money to be able to pay the instalment. "We have loans to pay off and not getting enough trips in a day and in a month adversely affects our earnings and we find it hard to make both ends meet. The growth of unregulated taxi drivers has further dented our earnings," said a cab driver who didn't want to be named.

# Cargo services see 30% drop at B'luru airport

## Priority for perishable goods; non-essentials piling up

BENGALURU, DHNS

A vehicle deployed for cargo services at the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru on Monday.
DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

The West Asia crisis has also hit the cargo services at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA). "Compared to the corresponding period last year, we have witnessed a nearly 25 to 30% drop in daily cargo tonnage since the escalation began," a cargo personnel at the airport said.

He noted that managing the backlog of stranded export cargo has become a big challenge for warehouse management. "We are prioritising perishable goods, but non-essentials are piling up. We are exploring options to divert some of Bengaluru's cargo to hubs like Singapore or Colombo to bypass the crisis zone," he added.

"Airlines are forced to carry extra fuel for the longer routes, which directly impacts the payload or the maximum cargo weight the plane can carry. In some cases, we had to offload cargo at the last minute to accommodate the extra fuel weight," the staff explained.

"There are plans at the management level to waive or reduce storage fees for exporters whose goods are stuck due to these cancellations." he said.

The tension in West Asia and airspace restrictions led to cancellation of 19 flights from the KIA on Monday.

According to airport sources, nine arrivals and ten departures were cancelled on March 9. Key affected include high-traffic routes such as Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Dubai, and Doha.

The Bangalore International Airport Limited has established a dedicated help desk at Terminal 2 to assist commuters.

Passengers bound for Jeddah were among the worst hit on Monday. "My flight is rescheduled for tomorrow. We are sitting here with no clarity on when the airspace will reopen." said Rahamatullah, a passenger.

# Activists urge Azim Premji varsity to drop criminal cases against students

BENGALURU, DHNS

A group of prominent academics, writers, and civil society members from across the state have written an open letter to the Vice-Chancellor of Azim Premji University (APU), urging the immediate withdrawal of criminal cases filed against members of the student-run 'Spark Reading Circle'.

The letter, signed by over 90 individuals including writers, artists, professors and local activists, described the university's decision to pursue police action under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the IT Act, an "extreme measure".

Lekha, a representative from AISA, stated that a university should not take criminal action against its own students. She argued that there is a clear power imbalance, noting it is unfair that the university directed a security supervisor to file the complaint against the ABVP, while the registrar himself filed the complaint against the students. She added that the university should instead protect progressive, free-thinking students trying to uphold democratic values.

The controversy stems from a scheduled discussion on the 1991 Kunan-Poshpora incident in Kashmir, which was organised by the reading group on February 24.

The situation escalated when activists from the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) allegedly trespassed into the Sarjapura campus, vandalised property, and assaulted security personnel to protest the event, which they termed "anti-national".

While the police detained the protesters, the university administration filed a separate complaint against the creators of the Spark Reading Circle Instagram page, alleging the misuse of the university's name and the circulation of content that could "incite enmity".

The signatories of the open letter argued that while universities have the right to internal disciplinary processes, invoking criminal law for a student discussion creates a chilling effect on academic freedom.

"Educational institutions should be spaces that encourage students to critically examine society and state policies through dialogue," the letter stated, adding that the violence by outside groups should not lead to the criminalisation of students.

The University's Student Council has also expressed concern. In a statement, the council noted that while those who forcibly entered and damaged campus property were granted bail, students who organised a peaceful gathering despite potential procedural lapses are facing non-bailable charges.

The APU administration has defended its stance, maintaining that the Instagram page had no official affiliation and that no prior permission was sought for the event. However, the academic community has called on the vice-chancellor to rely on internal, non-criminal mechanisms to resolve the matter.

## Woman killed in elephant attack in Kodagu

**MADIKERI, DHNS:** A 55-year-old woman was killed in an elephant attack in Kodagu on Monday. Jalajakshi from Balegundi in Valnoor of Kushalnagar taluk is the deceased. With this, the number of deaths in elephant attacks in the district since January has risen to four.

The elephant attacked Jalajakshi while she and four others were walking along the periphery of the forest. Others ran from the spot and saved their lives, a seriously injured Jalajakshi died on the spot, said DCF Abhishek. Jalajakshi was a former member of Nanjarayapattana gram panchayat. Meanwhile, Abhi, a 21-year-old elephant, died of illness at Mathigodu elephant camp.

## Nomadic SC communities slam govt for not fulfilling promises

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Confederation of Untouchable Nomadic Communities of Karnataka has slammed the state government for not standing by its word of creating a separate corporation and providing a separate package in the Budget.

"Apart from announcing four residential schools, the government has not fulfilled any of the demands by the untouchable SC communities. The government succumbed to the pressure by dominant SC communities and didn't provide the nomadic communities their deserved share in internal reservation," the confederation said in a press note.

Even though there is currently a corporation for nomadic communities, it also includes communities such as Korama and Koracha. The confederation has sought a corporation for only the 49 nomadic and semi-nomadic communities.

The confederation lamented that none of their 10 demands placed to the government, including seeking a separate 1% reservation, 5% funds in the special component plan and demand for 500 houses for each of the 31 districts, were fulfilled.

"The fight for our rights will not end here. Our numbers may be less and we may not be able to make you victorious in elections. However, we have the power to expose your pro-dominant community politics in front of the people of the state. We will hit the streets to get our rightful share in internal reservation alongside our legal fight," the confederation warned.

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## Protest for internal reservation on March 12

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The internal reservation struggle committee has called for a massive state-level protest on Thursday (March 12) against the state government's decision to recruit 56,432 government jobs without providing internal reservation.

The committee, which held a press conference on Monday, slammed the government's decision to not go for internal reservation despite having passed the Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-classification) Bill, 2026.

"This government always speaks of the Constitution and Babasaheb Dr B R Ambedkar but has been anti-social justice in its policy... We cannot tolerate this injustice any longer. Thus, aware citizens and the community are giving a 'do or die' call. Through a massive protest in Bengaluru on March 12, we intend to teach a lesson to the government." The committee has urged the state government to withdraw the government order passed on February 27 and implement internal reservation in recruitment.

It also asked the government to recommend the Union government to provide 56% reservation, take an all-party delegation, and ensure that the renewed reservation matrix is added to the 9th schedule of the Constitution, the committee urged.

The committee recommended the government to provide a separate 1% reservation for the nomadic communities and also sought the resignation of Social Welfare Minister Dr H C Mahadevappa.

# NBWL panel for rejection of Sharavathi pumped storage project

### Joint committee conducts field visits, meets people

BENGALURU, DHNS

A committee set up by the National Board of Wildlife (NBWL) has recommended the rejection of 2,000-MW power project in the Sharavathi Valley Lion Tailed Macaque (LTM) sanctuary after a site inspection showed that the proposal neither had technical merit nor public interest even though it would damage the fragile ecosystem of the Ghats. In addition, the panel flagged concealment of facts.

The joint committee comprising members H S Singh and Raman Sukumar, and Shivakumar C M from the National Tiger Conservation Authority visited the project site following a direction by the NBWL chairman during the Board's September 3, 2025 meeting.

Besides going through documents and consulting people, the members undertook field visits of all the forest areas proposed for diversion.

"The proposed activities are likely to result in habitat fragmentation, disturbance to wildlife, cumulative stress on forest and riverine ecosystems, and long-term degradation of ecological integrity in an area already under pressure from existing infrastructure.

The committee conducted the inspection following directions from the National Board of Wildlife chairman.

#### Species threatened

While KPCL had pointed to the project's design to utilise the existing dams rather than constructing a new one as a primary advantage, the committee pointed out that the construction of dams has caused extensive loss of "prime, highly productive valley habitats" for the wildlife.

"The construction of three dams across the Sharavathi river and its major tributary has already fragmented the entire landscape of the Sharavathi sanctuary and the adjoining forest tracts in the central Western Ghats of Karnataka," it said.

Moreover, the committee noted, the loss of dense evergreen and semi-evergreen forests and the widespread disturbance during its five-year construction phase will leave "very limited scope for the survival" of a small population of LTMs in the southern part of the sanctuary.

The widening of the road along a "pristine perennial stream" will cause siltation, leading to degradation of the aquatic habitats and loss of several rare and endemic species of the Ghats.

#### Facts concealed

The committee said the KPCL's submission that existing 220 kV power transmission lines will be used to evacuate 2,000-MW, which requires 400 kV lines, "appears to be an attempt to conceal facts".

"During the field visit, the KPCL officer informed us that the existing lines will be dismantled and replaced with a new one. This will involve transportation of dismantled materials out of the area and movement of new structural materials in rugged, hilly terrain. Construction of approach roads through forest areas will be required for the transportation. This critical component has not been disclosed," it said.

The committee recorded the massive opposition to the project by the people of the area and also sought a legal examination to check whether construction of a massive powerhouse and the connection to the existing transmission lines falls under the prohibited or regulated activity.

"When assessed holistically, the limited operational benefit offered by the project seems outweighed by the irreversible ecological, environmental, and social costs involved," the report noted, listing at least five more reasons to reject the project.

Wildlife conservationist Veeresh G said the committee had laid bare the true enormity of the project's destructive nature.

"Ideally, the chief wildlife warden should have given this report. Unfortunately, we had to wait for a committee set up by an apex body to tell us the simple facts. Moreover, there is no provision in the law to allow projects like this inside any sanctuary," he said.

## Oil prices soar; stocks, rupee fall

**Oil price, From Page 1**

"The spike in oil prices, weakness in the rupee, and continued foreign institutional investor (FII) selling further intensified the sell-off in domestic equities," said Ajit Mishra, a senior vice president Religare Broking.

The West Asia crisis has made Indian investors poorer by over Rs 22 lakh crore in just over a week.

The combined market capitalisation of all companies listed at BSE fell by Rs 8.5 lakh crore to around Rs 441 lakh crore on Monday.

Analysts said prolonged periods of elevated crude oil prices would accelerate foreign capital outflow, further weaken rupee and drive up inflationary pressure. According to SBI Research, every $10 increase in the oil price may lead to 35-40 bps rise in inflation.

However, the Modi government sought to downplay the inflation risk.

"Given that India's inflation is near the lower bound, the impact on inflation is not estimated to be substantial at this point," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a written reply in Lok Sabha.

She added that the medium-term impact of the global crude oil price rise on inflation would depend on several factors, including exchange rate movements, global demand and supply situation, monetary policy transmission and the extent of the indirect pass-through.

Meanwhile, the government has ruled out any immediate hike in retail price of diesel and petrol despite the surge in import bills.

According to official sources, oil marketing companies are expected to absorb the current cost pressure for the time being.

Last week, cooking gas price was hiked sharply. Price of an LPG cylinder for domestic use has been hiked by Rs 60 while commercial cylinders have become costlier by Rs 114.5 each with effect from March 7.

To prevent hoarding the oil marketing companies have increased the minimum waiting period for booking a domestic LPG cylinder refill from 21 days to 25 days.

## 629 firms shifted reg office from K'taka in 5 yrs

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** Union Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Harsh Malhotra on Monday said that 629 companies have shifted their registered office from Karnataka to other states in the last five years.

KARNATAKA in PARLIAMENT

"For administrative and operational convenience, companies have shifted their offices with the aim of expanding business activities," he said while replying to Chikkaballapur MP K Sudhakar during the Question Hour in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

## KIOCL gets Centre's nod to explore iron ore in Chitradurga

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** An expert committee of the Ministry of Union Environment has approved a proposal by the Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited (KIOCL) to explore iron and manganese ore in 160 acres of reserved forest in the arid Chitradurga district.

Located in Holalkere range, the 160-acre forest is part of the 9,749.44 acres Nirthadi Reserve Forest notified by the erstwhile Mysore government in 1939. During the exploration stage, the KIOCL will cut down over 700 trees.

The area is home to leopard, sloth bear, jackal, pangolin, hare, wild bore, porcupine, monitor lizard, peafowl and grey partridge among other fauna recorded in the area.

In its application, the company stated that the mine block in the reserve forest was not explored fully in the past to assess the available resources. "Further prospecting is required to estimate quantity and grade of the mineral deposit in order to assess the potentiality. Thus, undertaking in forest land has become inevitable," the proposal said.

The Regional Empowered Committee of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, while approving the project, fixed the initial deadline for works at six months extendable up to another six months.

The exploration involves digging 24 pits of 1-metre deep and drilling of 34 boreholes of 4-inch diameter to a depth of 60 to 100 metres for the technical assessments.

## Karnataka farmers availed of Rs 2.1L crore loan

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary on Monday informed the Lok Sabha that farmers in Karnataka have availed a total of Rs 2.10 lakh crore in loans for agriculture.

Quoting a NABARD report, the minister said that Tamil Nadu holds the top position in the country for agriculture loans, while Karnataka ranks fifth.

Farmers in Karnataka have taken crop loans worth Rs 88,800 crore, while they have availed of term loans worth Rs 1.21 lakh crore, the minister said during Question Hour.

## Tumakuru govt doctor, staffer held in bribery case

**TUMAKURU, DHNS:** The Lokayukta sleuths on Monday arrested an eye specialist at the district hospital and a staff in a bribery case.

A team of Lokayukta cops, led by DySPs K M Santosh and Manjunath, trapped Dr Savitha and a contract staff while accepting a bribe of Rs 6,000 in exchange of an eye surgery on an elderly woman.

According to complainant Avinash, an autorickshaw driver, Dr Savitha had examined his mother's eyes and advised for an cataract surgery.

She sought Rs 6,000 to perform surgery.

The Lokayukta cops laid a trap and accordingly caught Manoj, a contract staff, while accepting the bribe money on behalf of the doctor.

Lokayukta inspector T Raju took Manoj, along with bribe money, into custody.

They arrested Dr Savitha after Manoj revealed her name during the interrogation.

## Boy accused of killing hostel mate in Ballari nabbed

BALLARI/HUBBALLI, DHNS

A 15-year-old boy accused of killing a hostel mate and injuring several others at a private residential school in Ballari district was taken into custody on Monday. He was picked up from the outskirts of the city.

On March 7, between 10 pm and 11 pm, the accused allegedly went on a rampage, killing his roommate. The condition of one boy remains serious, and he is undergoing treatment in Andhra Pradesh's Kurnool.

Others, including a girl and a 29-year-old warden, have been discharged after treatment. Police are yet to ascertain the motive of the crime.

Police sources stated that the accused had repeatedly requested his parents to take him home, as he did not like the hostel.

#### 'Sensitive case'

Ballari Range Inspector General of Police, Harsha P S, said the case is very sensitive and needs to be handled with utmost caution, as the accused is a juvenile and the victims are underage.

"Apart from the police, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, officials from the Child Protection Unit, general physicians, and officials from other related departments will be present during the questioning of the boy," he said.

He added that after a medical examination, the accused was produced before the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Board, and information regarding the motive and other details would be sought as per the guidelines of the JJ Act, 2015.

Harsha also said they would urge the education department to conduct a thorough investigation into the role of the residential school, and if it is found to have violated any rules, action would be initiated against it.

The father of the deceased, a lawyer by profession, alleged that the school management failed in its duty to protect his son. "I am told that there were no male wardens and no proper security system in place to prevent any untoward incident," he said.

According to a report submitted by the Child Protection Unit, the school did not have proper authorisation to run a hostel. The report also states that the school had not appointed any male warden to supervise the students, and that the CCTV cameras installed in the hostel were defunct.

Members of the school management have been absconding since the incident, claimed sources.

#### Braveheart

The bravery of a 15-year-old saved two kids on the fateful night. The boy, who sustained stab injuries in the melee, dragged the accused out of the room and locked the door from inside.

Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa said that there is no concept of residential school in his department and local authorities may have granted permission in Ballari.

## GBA publishes draft electoral roll...

**GBA, from Page 1**

Among the 369 wards, ward No 51 (Subramanyapura) in Bengaluru South City Corporation has the highest number of voters (54,026), while ward No 16 (Kotturu) in Bengaluru East City Corporation has the lowest (10,940). Overall, male voters outnumber their female counterparts by 2.48 lakh.

With the draft electoral roll made available on GBA's official website (https://gba.karnataka.gov.in/electoral2026), citizens have been given six days to file claims and objections, if any. Voters can search their names using EPIC number or name. If the name is missing or appears under a different ward, voters can submit objections too, officials said. The final electoral roll will be published on April 6, 2026.

Meanwhile, the GBA has requested the recognised and registered political parties to appoint one booth-level agent for each polling station in every ward to assist polling officials in enrolling all eligible voters. For the convenience of voters and the public, the voters' list will be made available for inspection at the offices of the Electoral Registration Officers and ward offices.

## Govt drops plan to build stadium on KSIC land

**KSIC land, from Page 1**

The Mysore Silk received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2005-06.

The KSIC Filature Factory at T Narsipur was established in 1912 by Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar, Ashoka pointed out. "The very idea of dismantling such an institution exposed the Congress government's shocking disregard for our heritage, workers and environment," he charged.

#### 'Plan to stop online sales'

Even Urban Development Minister BS Suresha (Byrathi) said in the Assembly that his government should save the KSIC.

"There's a huge demand for KSIC. We get calls from our cousins in America. There's a two-month waiting period for sarees. KSIC has a big history and it must be encouraged," he said.

Venkatesh said the government is planning to halt online sales of KSIC silk sarees in order to meet local demands first.

Krishnaraja BJP MLA Srivatsa TS claimed that people queued up from 3 am to buy silk sarees and urged the government to augment production to meet the demand.

Venkatesh said 350-400 sarees are made daily. "Demand is high because of good quality. Women are meticulous while buying sarees. Even a small damage means they won't buy it," he said. "We're planning to stop online sales so that local demands are met first."

Venkatesh clarified that people queued up from 3 am only during 'seconds sales'. "These are sarees with some damage that are offered with up to 30% discount," he said.

## Yatnal rules out rejoining BJP under 'corrupt family' leadership

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Expelled BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal on Monday ruled out rejoining the party as long as what he termed a "corrupt family" continues to lead the party in Karnataka.

Yatnal also said that his yet-to-be-launched JCB Party will come to power in the state, and he will be the next chief minister.

Speaking to reporters here, he said he had not come to the national capital to meet the BJP leaders and dismissed speculation that he was lobbying to return to the party.

A staunch critic of former CM B S Yediyurappa, Yatnal alleged that the BJP leadership in Karnataka is concentrated within the family of Yediyurappa.

Responding to a question on whether he would return to the BJP, Yatnal said he would not accept the leadership of what he described as a 'corrupt family' in the party's Karnataka unit.

"We are people who live with self-respect. We will not accept the leadership of this corrupt family. As long as that corrupt family remains in the leadership of the BJP in Karnataka, the question of joining the BJP does not arise," he said.

"I am not the kind of person who goes to someone's house pleading to be taken into the BJP or begging for favour. Don't run such stories tomorrow unnecessarily. We are open about everything. I don't have to go there and fall at someone's feet for politics," Yatnal said.

He said his visit to the capital was to invite friends to his son's marriage. Yatnal also indicated about floating a new political party.

# Bengaluru hotels hit by commercial LPG shortage, may shut down

**LPG, from Page 1**

Rao said: "Gas is basic for a hotel. While smaller hotels have a stock of up to two days, bigger ones may sustain for a week. Depending on as and when the stocks are exhausted, hotels will start closing down.

Representatives of the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), which caters to over 62 lakh consumers in the state, maintained that there was no supply disruption as on Monday. However, they acknowledged that the situation was grim.

Meanwhile, Rao said hotels are an essential service as they cater to many classes of people including students, drivers, bachelors and the working class and that the Union government should intervene immediately.

"We have conveyed our concerns to the MPs elected from Bengaluru also. We hope there will be a positive outcome and the supply of cylinders will resume soon," Rao said.

The hoteliers are also planning strategies in case gas supply doesn't resume. "Some might still run with food items like juices, salads and ice creams," Rao said.

Responding to the hoteliers' announcement, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah opined their decision was right. "The Union government has increased the price of commercial LPG cylinders by as much as Rs 115 which is a big burden. Their (hoteliers) decision is right," he said.

An IOCL representative told *DH* that the situation was "normal" on Monday.

"However, the situation is dynamic and we are not sure how it will phase out in the coming days. We are closely watching the developments and preparing to face some disruption," he said.

While the supply disruptions were not much in Bengaluru, many districts including Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, Dharwad, Haveri, and Uttara Kannada saw some disruptions.

"Earlier, we used to receive as many cylinders as we requested. But for the past few days, we have not been receiving the required number of cylinders. We are somehow managing supply with the limited cylinders we receive," said the owner of an Indane Gas agency in Mangaluru.

Across Haveri district, LPG supply has been disrupted. Stocks used to arrive every day, but no stock has arrived in the last two days.

The price of a domestic LPG cylinder is Rs 970. Agency representatives are informing customers that cylinders will be supplied once every three days.

"Our agency requires about 1,500 cylinders per day. Earlier, cylinders were delivered within a day of booking. Now customers are booking cylinders, but we are unable to supply them on time. We are informing customers who book today that cylinders will be delivered after three to four days," said a representative of the Magavi HP Agency.

#### Panic buying

Given that the situation might worsen, many households are booking LPG cylinders even before the stipulated time and this has to be kept under check, IOCL officials said.

The distributors will strictly maintain a 25-day gap between the delivery of the last cylinder and bookings for a new cylinder, the official from IOCL said.

"We are seeing panic buying among people. The 25-days rule has always been there but given that everything was normal, not all agencies enforced it. Now that people are trying to stock up unnecessarily, we have to strictly enforce these norms," the official said.

#### How long can hotels sustain?

While bigger hotels in Bengaluru may have a stock for up to a week, many smaller hotels can utmost manage for two days since they wouldn't have much space to stock up. Hence, if the supply is disrupted, many of them will be forced to shut down temporarily in the next two days.

A hotel owner said: "We alternatively have a firewood place, so if we run out of cylinders, we can still keep the hotels open and serve food in a worse case scenario (maybe limit the menu) as we are an essential service. We will take a call on this depending on the situation."

## Couple killed as stairs collapse

**HATTI GOLD MINES (RAICHUR DIST), DHNS:** A couple was killed after the stairs of an underconstruction house collapsed on them at Yalagatta near Hatti Gold Mines in Raichur district on Monday. The deceased were identified as Dyavappa Suguru (38) and his wife Shivamma (32), both construction workers. The bodies have been shifted to Lingsugur government hospital for post mortem. Police visited the spot.

## ◆ WEATHER ◆

**Overview:** Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

**Forecast March 10:** Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

**INTERIOR NORTH**

| Stations | Max | Min | Rain |
|---|---|---|---|
| Belagavi | 35.9 | 18.6 | 00 |
| Bidar | 36 | 16.6 | 00 |
| Vijayapura | 37 | 23.5 | 00 |
| Dharwad | 36 | 18.2 | 00 |
| Haveri | 36.2 | 21.2 | 00 |
| Kalaburagi | 39.4 | 21.6 | 00 |
| Raichur | 36.6 | 20 | 00 |
| **COASTAL** | | | |
| Honnavar | 32.9 | 22.8 | 00 |
| Karwar | 34 | 24.6 | 00 |
| Shirali | NA | NA | NA |
| Mangaluru | 33.6 | 25.6 | 00 |

**INTERIOR SOUTH**

| Stations | Max | Min | Rain |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agumbe | NA | NA | 00 |
| Bengaluru | 33.4 | 20.6 | 00 |
| Ballari | NA | NA | NA |
| Chamarajanagar | NA | NA | NA |
| Chikkamagaluru | NA | NA | NA |
| Chitradurga | 35.1 | 18.5 | 00 |
| Davangere | 35.5 | 18.5 | 00 |
| Hassan | 33.5 | 14 | 00 |
| Mysuru | 33.2 | 20.4 | 00 |
| Madikeri | NA | NA | NA |
| Kolar | 33.4 | 17.4 | 00 |

**OTHER STATIONS**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Delhi | 35.6 | 19 | 00 |
| Kolkata | 31.7 | 24.2 | 00 |
| Mumbai | 35.8 | 21.3 | 00 |
| Chennai | 34.9 | 24.7 | 00 |
| Pune | 37.1 | 15.4 | 00 |
| Hyderabad | 36.2 | 21.9 | 00 |
| Th'puram | 35.1 | 24.7 | 00 |

## I-T Dept detects hidden sales worth Rs 408 cr by restaurants

**NEW DELHI, PTI:** The Income Tax Department has detected under-reporting of sales worth Rs 408 crore after it conducted a nationwide survey of restaurants on charges of tax evasion, the CBDT said on Monday.

After visiting business premises of restaurants on Sunday, the taxman is now sending emails and messages to 63,000 such outlets, "requesting" them to update their income tax returns (ITRs) by March 31, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

The action is part of the NUDGE -- Non-Intrusive Usage of Data to Guide and Enable -- campaign.

"A nationwide survey was conducted on 62 restaurants across 46 cities in 22 states. On a preliminary basis, the exercise revealed suppression of sales amounting to around Rs 408 crore," the CBDT said.

The cities where the survey was undertaken include Delhi, Shimla, Murthal (Harayana), Gurugram, Guwahati, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Siliguri, Godhra, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Kollam, Kochi, Madurai, Coimbatore, Raipur, Bhopal, Indore, Ajmer, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Koderma, Patna, Cuttack and Puri, among others, according to I-T department officials.

The statement said that a probe into these findings is underway.

The CBDT said the investigation began after the taxman initiated a probe in November 2025 covering the food and beverage sector.

"During the exercise, it was found that several restaurants were engaged in deletion of bulk bills and other modifications to suppress the actual sales," it said.

REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

# Women's quota: Govt reaches out to Oppn to implement law early

## Mulls amendment to law to omit delimitation clause

SHEMIN JOY & AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Narendra Modi government has reached out to the Opposition for its views on a proposal to amend the law providing 33% reservation for women in Parliament and Assemblies to ensure its early implementation, said sources on Monday.

While a timeline for bringing the Bill to Parliament has not been specified, sources referred to Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju's remarks last month when he said that a "critical Bill" would be brought in Parliament during the second leg of the Budget Session, which ends on April 2.

The Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023, or the "Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam", was passed in a special session in September 2023, providing for a 33% quota for women.

It had said that the quota would come into effect after a delimitation of constituencies was undertaken after the first Census following the Act's commencement.

This would mean that the quota could be implemented after a delimitation exercise conducted following Census 2027, whose population enumeration phase will end in February next year, leaving a tight schedule for a delimitation commission to complete its work before the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

Sources said top Opposition leaders were approached during the Budget Session recess, but no detailed discussion had taken place on the issue.

Indications were that the government plans to amend the law to omit the clause on delimitation of the constituencies after Census 2027.

A floor manager from the ruling BJP indicated that a final call was yet to be taken, but said legislation could be expected this session. There was no confirmation if a constitutional amendment was in the offing. If the changes come, the quota could be implemented during elections in 2027, which include the one in Uttar Pradesh.

### Oppn's considerations

While the Opposition views it as "another headline-grabbing" proposal and the BJP's eagerness to dominate the Parliament session at a time when the government is reeling under pressure over the West Asia situation and other issues, it would be difficult for it to oppose the move to advance the timeline to implement the women's quota.

While participating in the debate on the Bill in September 2023, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge had said that the quota should be implemented then and there.

The Congress' 2024 Lok Sabha poll manifesto had said the existing Act was the "BJP's great betrayal of women", as it contained the "sinister provisions" that would allow the reservation to come into operation only beyond 2029.

It had then promised to "delete the sinister provisions" and ensure the law's immediate implementation.

# No-trust motion against Birla today

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

The Lok Sabha will take up the no-confidence motion against Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday, having set aside 10 hours for the debate.

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju is expected to open the debate on behalf of the treasury benches.

While the first day of the Budget Session's second leg saw disruptions, the no-confidence motion is expected to see a debate on Tuesday and Wednesday. While the Opposition was insistent on a day-long debate, the government agreed to two.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will reply. Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, following tradition, is unlikely to speak during the motion.

"When the first such motion was taken up (against G V Mavalankar), then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru set aside only one hour. Upon continued insistence, the government eventually set aside two and a half hours. In this case, they asked for a day-long discussion. We have agreed on two," said Rijiju.

### Key speakers

Key speakers from the NDA include Ravi Shankar Prasad, Anurag Thakur, Nishikant Dubey, Bhartruhari Mahtab, Jagdambika Pal, and Tejaswi Surya. Shah will be the final speaker.

From the Congress, deputy Lok Sabha leader Gaurav Gogoi, senior leaders Manish Tewari and Deepender Hooda, as well as Jothimani will speak.

Jothimani was among the women leaders the BJP had accused of trying to harm Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

From the Trinamool Congress, Sayani Ghosh and Mahua Moitra are likely to speak. While the TMC was not a signatory to the motion, it is expected to vote against the Speaker.

### Nos unlikely to add up

Despite that, the numbers are unlikely to add up. All of the Opposition's 238 MPs will not be able to vote: eight of them were suspended in the previous part of the session.

The NDA, however, has 293 MPs, including the BJP's 240, the JD(U)'s 16, and the TDP's 12. The motion needs 272 votes to pass.

On Saturday, Modi lent an endorsement to Birla at a function in the latter's constituency, Kota.

"Om Birla is an excellent Member of Parliament and a remarkable Speaker. He is fully dedicated to the Constitution and deeply committed to parliamentary traditions," said the Prime Minister.

# Opposition walks out of Rajya Sabha, LS adjourned over West Asia issue

NEW DELHI, DHNS

INDIA NEEDS A LEADER NOT A SILENT
OIL PRICES? MODI LECTURES
देश को नेतृत्व चाहिए, रता नहीं
NATIONAL SECURITY ENERGY SECURITY
GULF BURNING, OIL SHOCK. INDIANS STRAN
INDIA NEEDS LEADERSHIP – NOT SILENC

**Opposition leaders stage a protest over the West Asia crisis with posters and banners reading, 'Gulf burning, oil shock. Indians stranded; India needs leadership, not silence', during the second part of Budget session of Parliament, in New Delhi, on Monday.** PTI

The resolution seeking the removal of Om Birla as the Speaker could not be taken up for discussion in the Lok Sabha on Monday as a relentless Opposition insisted on an immediate discussion on the situation in West Asia, leading to the adjournment of the House without any substantial business except for a government statement on the Iran issue.

The West Asia issue dominated the Rajya Sabha as well on the first day of the Budget Session's second leg, with the Opposition walking out of the House for the day after Chairman C P Radhakrishnan refused to entertain Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge's demand for a short discussion on West Asia before External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar made a statement on the issue.

The resolution to remove Birla is likely to be taken up on Tuesday, for which 10 hours have been allocated.

Birla is accused of not allowing Rahul and other Opposition leaders to speak, suspending MPs, accusing women MPs of planning to attack Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and parroting the government line on "controversial" issues.

The Lok Sabha was adjourned for the day a little after 3 pm as the Congress and its allies' MPs trooped into the Well of the House demanding a discussion on the US-Israel attack on Iran and subsequent developments, even as Jagadambika Pal, who was on the Chair, attempted to get the Opposition-sponsored resolution seeking Birla's removal taken up for discussion.

Pal alleged that the Opposition did not want to run the House and was "not serious" about moving the resolution.

While the House was adjourned at 11 am for an hour after obituary references, Opposition MPs were on their feet as soon as it reassembled after Pal cited the Speaker's decision to reject their adjournment notices.

Armed with placards, Opposition MPs immediately occupied the Well of the House, shouting slogans as Jaishankar explained the government's stand on the West Asia situation.

As senior Congress MP K C Venugopal insisted that a debate on West Asia be allowed, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju accused the Opposition of not following the ethics of the House.

## Left party leaders resent Rahul's attack on CPM, Vijayan

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** CPM's John Brittas and CPI's P Sandoshkumar on Monday expressed their objections to Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi's speech at a Congress function attacking Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and alleging an understanding between the Left and the BJP at a meeting of I.N.D.I.A floor leaders, sources said.

Their comments did not lead to a wider discussion, as Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and other party leaders said that it was not a forum to discuss such issues since these are only meetings of floor leaders to fine-tune floor strategy.

Rahul, in a public meeting in Thiruvananthapuram, alleged that CPM is actually CJP (Communist Janata Party), as it has a secret understanding with the BJP. He also alleged that Vijayan was corrupt, and he is not in jail because of the understanding between the two parties.

## Vijay seeks 15-day relief from CBI

**CHENNAI, DHNS:** Summoned for the third round of questioning in the Karur stampede case on Tuesday, Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) chief and actor Vijay has asked the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to grant him 15 days to join the investigation and to hold the probe in Chennai instead of New Delhi.

The summoning comes amid speculation that the BJP and AIADMK were exerting intense pressure on Vijay to join the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for the April-May assembly elections.

Though BJP has been reaching out to TVK for past few months – it is believed that the new party is likely to cut majorly into the anti-incumbency votes. Vijay has been resisting the pressure.


**KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED**
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No. CGM(Tech)/DGM(PROC &APCC)/EE-Proc/AEE-7/2025-26/6533-549 & 6515-532 Date : 09.03.2026

KPTCL invites Bids on electronic mode for the following works against following Enquiry Numbers:

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

**Tender Enquiry number and Description**

**I. Enquiry No.: KPTCL/2025-26/UC/WORK_INDENT3439(Call-2)**

**Combined package for**

**Work-A:** Conversion of existing 66kV Peenya- Gokula- Hebbal DC line by proposed 66kV Class 1000 Sqmm UG Cable to existing 66/11kV Mathikere Sub-station and proposed under construction 220/66kV Mathikere GIS S/s infringing the proposed BSRP Railway track.@ **Ch 15/50**

**Work-B :** 66kV 1000Sqmm XLPE S/C UG Cable connectivity for modification of the existing ITI Hebbal DC OH line between existing 66/11kV LR Bande SS to proposed BSRP Railway track near Shampura Railway crossing.

**Work-C:** Running of Proposed 66KV 1000Sqmm SC UG Cable from existing 220/66KV HBR GIS Sub-station to Shampura Railway crossing for a distance of 1.63kms along with dismantling the existing 66kV DC Overhead Line.

On Total Turnkey basis including supply of all materials/equipment and establishment (including dismantling and Civil works), testing and commissioning.

Availability of bid documents in KPP portal on or after **10.03.2026 at 15.00 Hrs.** Last date & time for receipt of Bids is **08.04.2026 at 15.00 Hrs.**

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION**
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

**Tender Enquiry number and Description**

**II. Enquiry No.: KPTCL/2025-26/TL/WORK_INDENT3443 (Call-2)**

**Combined package of :**

**Work-A: Re-conductoring** of existing **110kV Raichur-Shahpur** DC line From existing **220/110/33/11KV** R/S at Raichur to Existing **220/110/33/11KV** R/S Shahapur by providing intermediate towers for a distance of 72.515 kms in Raichur district on **Total Turnkey basis** including supply of all matching materials/equipment, mandatory spares and erection (including civil works) of all materials/equipment, testing and commissioning, De-commissioning of materials/equipments along with buy back of released materials.

**Work-B: Reconstruction of 110 KV Shahabad – B Bagewadi DC Line,** using DC Towers and Lynx Conductor for a distance of 59.885kms in the existing corridor from 220Kv Shahabad S/s to 110Kv Moratagi S/s in Kalaburagi District on **Total Turnkey basis** including supply of all matching materials/equipment, mandatory spares and erection (including civil works) of all materials/equipment, testing and commissioning, De-commissioning of materials/equipments along with buy back of released materials.

**Work-C: Re-Construction** of existing **110 kV Humnabad-Gulbarga-I SC line** on SC tower by constructing 110kV DC new line on DC towers from 220/110kV Kapnoor Sub-station to 220/110/11 kV Humnabad sub-station LILO at 110/33/11 kV Mahagaon sub-station using existing corridor for a distance of 50.819kms along with construction of terminal bays in Kalaburagi Taluk and District on **Total Turnkey basis** including supply of all matching materials /equipment, mandatory spares and erection (including civil works) of all materials/equipment, testing and commissioning ,De-commissioning of materials/equipments along with buy back of released materials.

Availability of Bid documents in KPP portal : on or after **12.03.2026 at 15.00 Hrs**. Last date & time for receipt of Bids is **01.04.2026 @ 15.00 Hrs.**

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. **Any extension of Due date for Bid submission will be intimated in the Karnataka Public Procurement portal. Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours.**

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the Bids.

**Sd/- Chief General Manager(Tech)., Corporate Office, KPTCL, 11th Floor, Indhana Bhavan, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru - 560 009.**



**GOVT. TOOL ROOM & TRAINING CENTRE**
**Rajajinagar Industrial Estate, Bengaluru-560010.**
**Ph: 080-23157189, Fax: 080-23301683**

No.: GTTC/PROJ/CIVIL-ELE/WORKS/BID-157, 158/2025-26 Date: 04.02.2026

**e-TENDER NOTIFICATION (Corrigendum)**

Tenders for the following work have been invited through e-procurement by the Government Tool Room and Training Centre. Last date for submission of tender is being extended.

| Sl. No. | Bid No. | Cetntre Name | Name of work |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 158 | Sindhanur | Establishment of New GTTC Centre at Sindhanur, Raichur District |

The last date for submission of tender in the e-portal was **09.03.2026; is postponed to 17.03.2026 up to 5.30 p.m.** For more details, please visit the e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the helpline number: +91 9240214000; +91 9240214001.

**Sd/- Managing Director**



**SUVARNA AROGYA SURAKSHA TRUST**
**(Department of Health & Family Welfare)**
**Arogya Soudha, 7th Floor, Magadi Road, Bengaluru - 23**
**Ph: 080-22536200 e-mail: directorsast@gmail.com, estsast@gmail.com**

No: SAST/ADM/TEND/2/2025-ADM Date: 07.03.2026

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**

**Sub: Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust invites Tender for hiring of rental vehicle on monthly / daily / Airport pick & drop.**

Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust, Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka registered under the Indian Trust Act of 1882 is implementing various Government Health Schemes. For the successful implementation of its Schemes, the Trust seeks to **hire the services of rental vehicle on monthly / daily / Airport pick & drop.** Bids have to be submitted on the KPPP Portal at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in /#/portal /portal-home from 09.03.2026**. The last date for submission of bids in the e-Procurement portal is on **23.03.2026 up to 5.30 PM.**

**Sd/- Director (Operations)**
Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust

DIPR/CP/6092/SA/2025-26



**Department of Agriculture**
**Office of the Joint Director of Agriculture,**
**District Administrative Building, Bengaluru Rural District,**
**Bengaluru-562110. Email: jdabangalorerural@gmail.com**

No: JDA/BNG(R)/Tender/e-Proc/2025-26/282 Date: 06.03.2026

**E-Procurement Tender Notification**

The **Department of Agriculture, Bengaluru Rural District,** invites e-tenders through the KPPP Portal for engaging manpower through an outsource resource agency on an outsourcing basis for a period of one year or until further orders of the Department, to work under various departmental schemes against the sanctioned vacant posts in the office of the **Joint Director of Agriculture, Bengaluru Rural,** and its subordinate offices. **(1)** Tender Reference: **JDA/BNG(R)/Tender/e-Proc/2025-26 e-Tender No.: AD/2025-26/SE04812. (2)** Date of commencement for uploading the tender documents: **06.03.2026. (3)** Last date for uploading the Tender Form: **20.03.2026 up to 04.00 PM. (4)** Place and Date of Opening of Technical e-Procurement Bid: **Office of the Joint Director of Agriculture, Bengaluru Rural, District Administrative Building, Beerasandra, Devanahalli, Bengaluru Rural District-562110, on 23.03.2026 at 12.00 Noon. (5)** Date of Opening of Financial e-Procurement Bid: **The date will be intimated later. (6)** Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) payable along with the Tender: **Rs. 2,06,045/-. (8)** For further information, contact address: **Joint Director of Agriculture, Bangalore Rural, District Administration Building, Beerasandra, Devanahalli, Bangalore Rural District-562110. Telephone No.: 8277929918.**

**Sd/-**
**Tender Inviting Authority**
**Joint Director of Agriculture**
**Bengaluru Rural District.**

DIPR/CP/AAA/5989/2025-26



**Chamarajanagara Dist. Co-Operative Milk Union Ltd.,**
Kuderu Village & Post, Santhemarahalli Hobali, Chamarajanagara -571 316
Phone No. :08226-234848, E-mail: enggchamul@gmail.com

No: CHAMUL/ENGG/M(E)/TENDER/TECHNICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES/2025-26/Call-2 DATE-10.03.2026

**RE-TENDER NOTIFICATION**
**TENDER FOR PROVIDING TECHNICAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES (ICE-CREAM PLANT MECHANICAL WORKS) FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF 10KLPD ICE-CREAM PLANT, (EXPANDABLE UPTO 15KLPD) AT KUDERU, CHAMARAJANAGARA. (THROUGH KPPP PORTAL)**

- Chamarajanagar Co-operative Milk Union Ltd. (CHAMUL) Chamarajanagar, intends to establish state of the art Ice-Cream plant of capacity 10 KLPD (expandable to 15KLPD) at Kuderu, Chamarajanagara. The project site is located at Kuderu Village, Santhemarahalli Hobli, Chamarajanagara Dist.
- The bidder should be technical graduate, who must have worked for minimum period of 10years in any of ice cream plants of similar capacity and bidder should have thorough knowledge regarding production of different varities of ice creams.
- The bidder should have provided technical consultancy services (Mechanical Works) to ice-cream plants of capacity more than 15KLD and established at least two state of the art Ice-cream plants incorporating recent technologies with an outlay of (minimum) 20.00 Crores in the past five years.
- The Ice-cream plants must be in successful operation since at least one year and satisfactory working certificate issued recently by the client shall be enclosed.
- Interested bidders may participate in the tender through KPPP Portal under the existing system (Technical & Financial) and submit their tender through web site **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/**

1.Tender schedules may be downloaded from : **10.03.2026**
2.Last date and time for Tender submission : **23.03.2026 up to 4.00PM**
3.Tender [Part 1] to be opened on : **24.03.2026 at 04.05 PM**

**Bidders are advised to refer and understand the terms and conditions stipulated in the tender document before quoting. For technical clarifications if any, bidders may contact Manager (Engg), CHAMUL during working hours. Mob. No. 8867915047**

*For* Chamarajanagar Dist. Co-operative Milk Producers Societies Union Ltd.,
**Sd/- Managing Director**



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**Last date: 10.04.2026**

**Sd/-**
**Deputy Controller of Examinations**

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

# Bold new India: Reset and big results

On Sunday, amidst euphoria at a packed Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, India won the T20 World Cup for a record third time, crushing New Zealand by 96 runs in the final. And when the moment arrived, there was a sense of inevitability to it. This, however, wasn't the case not too long ago. When India won the inaugural ICC Men's T20 World Cup in 2007 in South Africa, they were almost accidental champions. The Indian cricket board viewed the shortest format with caution. Leadership was handed to the young MS Dhoni, who was still finding his feet in international cricket. There was no clear template for the ultra-short format; yet India managed to crack the code quickly. Their run through the tournament caught fans by surprise, sparking a nationwide fascination with T20 cricket. The launch of the Indian Premier League soon after strengthened that appeal. With the world's best players gathering in one competition, India should have been the biggest beneficiary. Yet, they could not recreate the 2007 magic, returning empty-handed, tournament after tournament. The closest they came to the title was in 2014, when they lost the final to Sri Lanka.

**Building on the mindset switch from 2024, India plays fearless cricket to win its third world T20 title**

For all their flair and finesse, India's approach began to look stuck in a time warp. While other teams surged ahead with fearless power hitting, India lacked that intent. The gap became impossible to ignore during the 2022 T20 World Cup semifinal at the Adelaide Oval. England chased down India's total without losing a wicket, forcing a hard reset. Coach Rahul Dravid and captain Rohit Sharma decided the team had to change its mindset. Caution gave way to calculated aggression. Rohit led the switch himself, encouraging his batters to attack from the start.

The results arrived in the Caribbean. Playing bold, high-intent cricket, India finally lifted their second world title almost 17 years after the first. In the final at Barbados, Rohit and his teammates held their nerve to defeat South Africa and end the long wait. Soon after, Dravid's tenure as head coach ended, and Rohit stepped away from T20 internationals. Yet the direction they set has not changed. The new management under Gautam Gambhir and Suryakumar Yadav has pushed the philosophy further, backing fearless batting. Today's lineup carries almost no trace of inhibition. Their power is intimidating, and few players reflect that attitude better than Abhishek Sharma. Coming into the final with just one half-century in seven innings, he produced a stunning 21-ball fifty that embodied this team's new spirit.

# Recurring frauds signal failing oversight

The Rs-590 crore fraud in the IDFC First Bank is a reminder that malpractices at this scale can still happen in banks and financial institutions that operate with stated claims of best practices. Measures implemented following the scams in Yes Bank, Punjab National Bank, etc., were believed to have ensured strong deterrence. The IDFC incident, reported in its Chandigarh branch, breaks this notion. The issue surfaced when the bank disclosed in a regulatory filing that it had detected fraud involving certain accounts linked to the Haryana government. The bank traced the fraud to unauthorised and fraudulent activities carried out by some employees at the branch, possibly aided by other individuals, and announced plans for a forensic audit.

A financial fraud of this nature cannot be seen as a minor, branch-level aberration. It reflects a systemic problem for which the bank is to be held responsible. The Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the bank, V Vaidyanathan, said it was an isolated case with no involvement of the senior management and that the process of recovery was initiated. He also noted that the bank had initiated counter-measures, including filing a police complaint. But these are still reactive steps that should not distract from the fact that the bank failed to prevent the fraud. In a system where continuous monitoring of processes is possible, this is a failure that places the protocols of the management under scrutiny. The response should not be limited to action against the errant staff because the senior management of the bank is morally and substantially accountable.

**The IDFC First scam calls for stronger banking processes and deterrence that restores public trust**

Law enforcement agencies under the Haryana government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are investigating the scam. The state government is reported to have recovered most of the funds diverted from the bank. At least eight people have been arrested in connection with the scam, which involved forgery, violation of procedures, and other malpractices. According to the investigators, the case would require sustained and in-depth investigation to unearth the entire nexus of public servants, bank officials, and the beneficiaries, and to understand the complex conspiracy and its execution. The probe would also require the analysis of extensive amounts of digital data. It should not leave any possibility open for the offenders. All those involved in the scam need to be held accountable. The outcome should prove a true example of deterrence and help establish trust in the banking system.

A COSTLY EMBRACE

# Home truths from an imperialist war

Moving closer to the Israel-US axis, India is drifting off its traditional commitment to a values-driven foreign policy

**JAGDISH RATTANANI**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel is a much-despised figure in many parts of the world, with an arrest warrant against him from the United Nations-backed International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Since he went to war in response to a Hamas attack on Israel in October 2023, the Israeli war machine has killed over 72,000 people in Gaza. The death toll and the number of injured, exceeding 170,000, are widely accepted globally, including by Israel, the perpetrators of these killings. The "indiscriminate, limitless, cruel and criminal killing of civilians (as) government policy–knowingly, evilly, maliciously, irresponsibly dictated," in the words of a former Israeli Prime Minister from Netanyahu's party, Ehud Olmert, marks Israel as a pariah State.

A similar playbook is now unfolding in Iran, which has been turned into a killing field with the joint Israeli-US war offensive that has already killed Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and is now raining more death and destruction. Note that the war does not enjoy widespread support in the US itself, and President Donald Trump will likely pay a heavy political price for it in the midterms. Many speculate that the war-mongering Netanyahu, who faces domestic corruption charges, finally got his chance by playing an egotistical Trump, who is in the grip of neocons and trapped by the Epstein files waiting to be unmasked.

How did India, with its rich history, a largely clear stance against imperialist forces since gaining independence, and a commitment to peace, stability, and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity worldwide, become entangled with this ogre of imperialism that is spreading havoc around the globe?

Consider how quickly events have stacked up to present an unhappy picture for India and the nation's position of "strategic autonomy": The signing of the Indo-US trade deal with its many onerous clauses for India in return for lower US tariffs on India; the ill-timed visit of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Israel and his speech to the Knesset just two days before Israel attacked Iran, with which India has had extraordinarily good relations; Netanyahu's reported claim citing a phone conversation with Modi after the attack on Iran that India stands with Israel though India offered no such statement on record (and indeed reiterated "the need for an early cessation of hostilities"); the US waiver to India allowing the import of Russian crude for a month in the wake of supply disruptions caused by the war; a certificate of good conduct implicit in remarks by the US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent that Indians have been "good actors"; the sinking in the Indian Ocean of an Iranian frigate that was a guest of India for the Presidential Review of the naval fleet and not in combat mode.

### Reclaiming civilisational ideals

Individually, and certainly when taken together, all of these paint a picture of an India pushed to the wall, genuflecting to world bullies and unable or unwilling to stand up as a proud nation with an independent voice. While Modi's presence in Israel can be said to have boosted Netanyahu, who is shunned by world leaders given his shameful record of war crimes, India got nothing in return but defence or trade deals that are of questionable value, given that they will likely push India deeper into an Israeli embrace that may well curb India's freedom of choice in upcoming deals and relations. The Netanyahu-Trump axis will not last long. By getting too cosy with a leadership whose signature call is narcissism and atrocities, India risks long-term damage to its standing and will be seen from here on as a legitimate target for all manner of pressure tactics by other players.

That these are short-term interests at play and not friendships being built is also clear. Consider remarks like that of the US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau that the US would not allow India the economic advantages it gave China and so build a competitor for itself, or a well-circulated clip from a television show in Israel where a commentator boasts that Israel would be busy selling defence systems to the world after the war and that while they have no production lines, "we took over all of India", whose 1.4 billion people will make these systems for Israel to sell!

From an Indian perspective, it should be clear now that these are dangerous liaisons. The nation must quickly exit to reassert its independence and reclaim its standing based not only on policies dictated by realism but also on working within the frame of principles and values that will outlast shorter-term power equations in a rapidly changing world order.

The Indian Council of World Affairs' publication on 75 years of Indian foreign policy offers voices that emphasise the moral dimension that India can and must bring to world affairs. For example, a former ambassador to the Russian Federation said India must "step onto the world stage and play its part in filling up the strategic and intellectual deficit, as well as the moral deficit". A former principal adviser to the defence ministry said India looks at national interest and the "good of humanity". Another voice in the publication wrote that India must build a "vocabulary which essentially projects to the world the moral values to which Indian foreign policy works".

While the remarks were offered by diplomats and experts in specific contexts, they also point to aspirations for reaching higher ground, of India taking on a larger role based on its ideas of values and principles that lie at the core of the Indian civilisational ethos.

*(The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR; Syndicate: The Billion Press)*

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

# Lost in conversion

From gallons to miles, the ghost of measurement systems refuses to leave

**DEEPA MOHAN**

Perhaps I am unique — or perhaps others who grew up in India in the late 1950s and early 1960s share this affliction—the lingering confusion between the imperial and metric systems. This was the time when India had just shifted from the imperial systems to the supposedly simpler and far more intuitive metric system. Instead of wrestling with 12 inches to a foot, three feet to a yard and 22 chains (yes, there was such a measurement) to a mile, I thought could simply rely on a base of 10 and be done with it.

Or so I believed—until I opened my Mathematics book.

"Aaargh!" I moaned as I realised that the imperial measurements, far from being quietly consigned to history, were alive and kicking in the problems set on every page of the textbook. My old friends, A, B and C were all there, but instead of moving on to centimetres, kilograms and hectares, they were still stuck filling water cisterns, tilling fields or building houses measured in inches, feet and yards. And it was not only feet and yards and miles. India had left the old rupee-*anna*-paise world behind - but not the mathematics textbook-writers.

There I was, grappling with conversions such as "12 pies make an *anna*, 16 *annas* make a rupee", and then expected to use these financial units to pay for work that involved building walls in feet and yards, or pouring liquids measured in gallons, ounces or quarts. My scores on my Maths test paper often resembled the month of May in Bengaluru. The red flowers of the gulmohar blossomed in single-digit numbers at the top of my test paper, accompanied by remarks "Must improve"—or worse.

I left childhood behind, but the conditioning of those yeas continues to linger even today. I can calculate in miles or kilometres without much trouble —but I always think of my height in feet and inches, and cannot quite transition to centimetres. I promptly declare that my body temperature is 98.4 but forget that this is on the Fahrenheit scale, not the more intuitive Centigrade one. (After all, 98.4 on Centigrade scale would mean I was boiling myself into non-existence — but I still cannot bring myself to say my temperature is 37 degrees C.)

Decades have passed since India adopted the metric system, and I thought, with some relief, that I had finally left the quagmire of imperial measurements behind.

Fate was waiting for me, wearing a wicked smile she reserves for those she intends to ambush.

This knock arrived in the form of my daughter meeting—and marrying—an American. When I travelled to visit her in the United States, all the Imperial measurements came rushing back into my life. Once again I was paying for petrol by the gallon and wondering how many miles I still had to go. The saving grace was that the mighty dollar was neatly divided into 100 cents.

Be that as it may, here I am, still making mistakes in my imperial calculations. Still talking about a 6-yard and a 9-yard *sari*—because it simply doesn't sound the same to call it a 5.4864 metre or 8.2296 metre *sari*).

Thank goodness, at least time is measured in units that are neither imperial nor metric, but in multiples of 12, and is the same across the world!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Karnataka DGP's initiative is welcome

The system of police constables working as orderlies in senior government officers' houses is an anachronism, a legacy of colonial mindset ('Time to erase blot on police system', Mar 9). It is high time this practice is abolished, allowing them to focus on their primary role of safeguarding citizens' security. The Director General of Police, M A Saleem, has taken a welcome initiative by ordering the withdrawal of police personnel deployed as orderlies and redirecting them to regular police duties. The state invests significant resources in recruiting and training constables; it is wasteful not to utilise their services effectively. A powerful lobby of police officers has foiled efforts towards reform, reflecting a corrupt system where officers curry favour with politicians. The latest order aims to deploy 3,000 personnel back to core police work. This system persists nationwide, and it's hoped that this move will bring about meaningful change.
**H R Bapu Satyanarayana**, Mysuru

## Fractured structure

The Prime Minister's repeated references to the West Bengal Chief Minister's absence from a function presided over by the President raise questions about protocol and notice periods. Did the CM receive sufficient advance notice? What were her reasons for not attending? Meanwhile, given the recent changes in governors, were protocols breached in not informing or consulting state CMs? This incident highlights fractures in our federal structure, which need urgent resolution to prevent a constitutional crisis.
**Hemachandra Basappa**, Bengaluru

## An emphatic win

Apropos 'SKY high: India T20 Champions again' (Mar 9), the Indian cricket team has retained the T20 World Cup, an unparalleled achievement. The team's batting lineup, including all-rounders, piled up a massive score of 255, and Jasprit Bumrah's bowling was instrumental in securing the win. Suryakumar Yadav's captaincy was impressive.
**C V Aravind**, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Look at what they (TMC) did to the President, they murdered the Constitution.
**Suvendu Adhikari**, West Bengal LoP

Accuse the other side of that which you are guilty.
**Joseph Goebbels**

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

# AI ethics and State power

The Anthropic ban reflects a rising conflict between corporate ethics and democratic control over the use of AI

**SRIDHAR KRISHNA**

Even as governments around the world seek greater control over artificial intelligence, the United States government designated Anthropic as a "supply chain risk" on February 27, 2026. Positions are being taken in the tussle between the executive and corporations over who should regulate AI and how. Does State sovereignty trump corporate ethical responsibility?

Anthropic was banned from entering into contracts with any US government department on account of their stand against using AI for fully autonomous weapons and domestic surveillance in the US. The government did not stop there; it indicated that this ban would include a secondary ban on any company that has a commercial relationship with Anthropic from entering into contracts with the US government.

This could have far-reaching consequences if the intent expressed translates to legal validity. Most major defence contractors, such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft, have investments and dealings with Anthropic. What happens to the billions of dollars these companies have invested in Anthropic? Will they be allowed to sell cloud services to Anthropic? Amazon's stock price remained flat after this announcement, suggesting the market does not believe the wider ban will hold but might only prevent them from using Anthropic for specific military contracts with the US government.

While Anthropic was denied a contract and banned, arch-rival OpenAI announced the next day that it had signed a contract with the Pentagon. OpenAI asserts that the contract prohibits using its technology for "mass domestic surveillance or directing fully autonomous weapons and making high-stakes automated decisions." A closer reading of the development suggests that OpenAI's restrictions apply where such use cases are already unlawful, allowing the Pentagon wide discretion. That had, all along, been the position of Peter Hegseth, the US Secretary of War.

### The limits of regulation

Corporations believe the executive does not adequately understand the risks and needs their guidance. The executive does not want the corporations to determine what they should and should not do. There is merit in both arguments.

On the one hand, the technology is the private property of the respective corporations, and they should not be forced to sell their technology to the military unconditionally. Corporate leaders such as Dario Amodei argue that they have an ethical duty to prevent their technology from being misused. The US government also has a historical record of exploiting legal loopholes, as it did when it authorised mass collection of civilian phone records, a fact disclosed by Edward Snowden in 2013.

On the other hand, it does seem counter to democratic principles that the ethical commitments of corporate CEOs should restrict governmental action. Decisions about government and military power ought to be made through democratic processes and not by private companies unilaterally. Accepting the corporation's stance in this case would be like an aircraft manufacturer, such as Lockheed Martin, deciding which missions the Pentagon could fly and which ones it could not, according to Alan Z Rozenshtein from the University of Minnesota. This is the case for "supply chain vulnerability".

Regarding the secondary boycott, Rozenshtein opines that the Pentagon cannot force all its contractors to stop using Anthropic or having any commercial relationship with the company. At best, they could prevent the use of Anthropic for executing specific contracts with the Department of Defence. Although the ban will be fully implemented after a six-month transition period, its legality, practicality, and real motive are questionable. There is also a discussion on whether Congress, not the executive, should decide on the ban.

2025 saw a rolling back of AI regulations across the world as no country wants to be left out of the benefits of AI innovation. The latest *State of AI Governance – 2025* report published by the Takshashila Institution in February 2026 shows that governments, initially worried about AI's potential harmful effects, are now enamoured with how they can increase military power and state control over narratives and citizens using AI. Even the European Union diluted its AI Act when it delayed the enforcement deadlines for its rules on "high-risk" AI until December 2027.

The arguments in court for and against Anthropic will be closely followed across the world and will have wide-ranging implications on the debate between AI, ethics, and the limits of democratic control.

*(The writer is a Senior Scholar at the Takshashila Institution)*

# Beyond business: How T T Jagannathan fuelled an assistive tech boom

E T B SIVAPRIYAN

T T Jagannathan, who was posthumously conferred the Padma Shri in January, not only transformed the TTK Group into a market leader in kitchen appliances but also quietly changed the lives of thousands of people with disabilities and spinal cord injuries.

Jagannathan single-handedly catapulted the TTK Group by turning one of its brands, Prestige, into a household name, especially through its pressure cookers.

In 2015, when assistive technology was still a nascent field in India, the industrialist funded the TTK Centre for Rehabilitation Research and Device Development (R2D2) at the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology Madras.

Eleven years later, the R2D2 centre has translated years of research into affordable, high-quality devices aimed at democratising assistive technology. The centre now has a 50-member team of engineers, clinicians, bioengineers, and people with disabilities who work as peer trainers and co-founders.

So far, the centre has developed 10 products primarily for people with spinal cord injuries. These include YD One (the country's lightest wheelchair), NeoStand, NeoFly, NeoBolt, Arise (a manual standing wheelchair), Kadam (an indigenously developed four-bar knee), and Pluto (a low-cost hand-neuro-rehabilitation device to restore hand functions).

Prof Sujatha Srinivasan, head of R2D2, said in a condolence message after Jagannathan's death in October 2025 that the industrialist was the first to believe in the them and never asked for projections.

"He asked, 'Will it help people?' And when we said yes, he said, 'Then let's make it happen,'" she said, adding that Jagannathan's contribution went beyond money.

"He gave us the freedom to explore, the courage to take risks, and the space to put users first through top-class engineering. In every milestone we have reached, his generosity and trust have been present."

Products developed at the centre are licensed through startups such as NeoMotion, Thryv Mobility, Phoenix Medical Systems, and Mobility India, which have launched these next-generation products in the market.

NeoBolt is used by individuals with spinal cord injuries and by food delivery partners in Chennai and Bengaluru through a partnership with Zomato.

A distinctive feature of the centre's work is its focus on user needs. Among its innovations are under-seat clip-on devices that convert mechanical wheelchairs into electric ones, equipped with gesture control and cruise mode. Unlike front-clipped market alternatives, these reduce fatigue, shoulder pain, and the overall footprint — an advantage in cramped Indian homes, offices, or schools.

For example, if someone has already purchased a mechanical wheelchair, the centre's clip-on devices can convert it into an electric one.

Manish Anand, assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at IIT Madras, told *DH* that R2D2's approach is to keep designs user-centric while ensuring that assistive devices remain affordable for Indians.

"There were multiple challenges in getting these products to the people who need them, including wheelchairs being sold without any prescriptions. Often the user is not the buyer. We are addressing this through CSR-led dissemination, and by training and tracking users long-term to ensure they continue to benefit from the devices," he said.

Another key aspect of the centre's work is integrating users into every step of the design process from day one, ensuring that devices align precisely with their requirements and avoid ill-suited products.

Anand said the problem statements originate from users' needs rather than engineers' assumptions. Users participate in design discussions, helping translate requirements into technical parameters and prioritising functionalities.

"This user-centric approach prevents mismatched priorities driven solely by engineering passion," he added.

Consider the experience of NeoBolt user M Jennifer, a former physical training teacher who was immobilised for nearly six years after suffering a spinal cord injury in an accident in 2014. She now rides 4 km from her house in Velachery to her workplace at the IIT Madras Research Park without assistance.

"This vehicle has given me the freedom of mobility—from being bedridden to a wheelchair user to now riding a vehicle on my own," Jennifer said. She is now an expert wheelchair peer trainer who teaches people with disabilities how to navigate on different terrains, including villages and hilly areas. Through intensive training programmes, she helps equip them with the skills to live more independently.

Prof Anand posed a broader question: Why limit wheelchair users from fun activities like visiting beaches or trekking, where they are rarely seen?

"It's not that they don't want to. They lack the right equipment. Ninety to ninety-five percent of available wheelchairs get stuck in beach sand due to technical specifications. We are developing a modular 'beach wheelchair' that can be clipped onto an existing chair to navigate sand," he said. The product is expected to be commercialised within two years.

Ashish Jebin, Lead (R&D) at R2D2, said the centre's approach begins with real user needs and designing solutions around them.

He added that even if people paralysed below the hip could benefit from a transfer-cum-mobility device currently under development.

"Our approach ensures that whatever solution we create addresses the problem reliably. We don't create something for its own sake. We make it modular. Even if a person has already purchased a mechanical or push wheelchair, we convert it into an electric one through a clip-on device," he said. **DHNS**

Ukraine's leader, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, travelled east to visit frontline troops trying to stave off Russian attacks, and invited *The New York Times* reporters to go with him

KIM BARKER

DH ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN

# On the road with Zelenskyy, weathered, weary but fighting

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, with tired eyes, deep worry lines and a beard flecked with grey, boarded a train on Thursday night in Kyiv to visit his troops in eastern Ukraine, where the fighting has been fiercest. It seemed a lonely journey.

The US-Israeli war launched against Iran almost a week earlier had pulled the world's attention away from Ukraine's bloody war with Russia and delayed the next round of US-backed peace talks. Supplies of air-defence missiles that Ukraine desperately would like for itself were being quickly consumed in the Middle East. At home, Ukrainians were increasingly exhausted after a cruel winter of Russian strikes. Zelenskyy, now leading Ukraine into the fifth year of this war, has made a habit of visiting soldiers near the front lines every month or two, even though his security detail hates these trips. Zelenskyy said he found them inspiring.

"I'm here for the morale level of officers and soldiers," Zelenskyy told me on Friday as we sat on a park bench in the city of Kramatorsk in the Donetsk region. Zelenskyy had invited *The New York Times* to join him on his trip east and spoke to me and Brendan Hoffman, one of our photographers, in a series of conversations that lasted about 90 minutes in all.

Zelenskyy said he wanted to go to Donetsk specifically because Russia is pushing Ukraine to give away the entire region as part of any peace deal, even the chunk that Ukraine still controls. It remains the biggest sticking point in the talks.

In his dance with a Trump administration eager to end the war and take credit, Zelenskyy has offered compromises. By going to Donetsk, he was strongly indicating that Ukraine did not plan to walk away from this territory.

"It's not about kilometres, it is about people," he said. "You see, the city's alive."

Zelenskyy gestured at the blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flag flying nearby, at joggers, at a confused man whose walk in the park had been interrupted by the militarylike arrival of the president's convoy.

Billboards in the city advertise hot dogs and hamburgers. People ride bikes and walk dogs. Grocery stores are open. Nearly 200,000 people live in the parts of the Donetsk region held by Ukraine.

Even if the US is distracted by another Middle Eastern war, and even if that war makes it harder to get the weapons it needs, Zelenskyy knows that Ukraine must still live and still fight. The front line is no more than 10 miles from Kramatorsk, close enough that Russian drone pilots have been able to target the city with nimble drones for almost six months.

As we sat on the park bench, an end to a war that has already killed more than 15,000 civilians and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian and Russian soldiers seemed very far away.

Our conversation was interrupted by sleet and an air-raid alert, as well. The second talk took place over a lunch of beet-and-horseradish salad, mashed potatoes and chicken cutlets in a hidden underground command post that smelled like pine trees. The third happened on the train ride back to Kyiv, the country's capital.

Zelenskyy's voice was slightly scratchy, and he occasionally coughed. After Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022, the Ukrainian leader looked almost boyish as he gave nightly speeches from a bunker, refusing offers by Western allies to evacuate him. Now he looks all of his 48 years.

In our conversations, he repeatedly made two points: that his country was willing to use its battle-tested expertise and technology to help US allies in the Middle East, but that Ukraine also needed more help fighting off Russia. He said he had sent Ukrainian-made interceptor drones and drone experts to help defend US military bases in Jordan. He said more experts would go to the Middle East to advise other countries on fighting the Iranian drones known as Shaheds, which Russia has used for years against Ukraine.

Now that they, too, are the target of Shaheds, Persian Gulf countries have been firing off costly Patriot interceptor missiles at a ferocious pace. It's the equivalent of using a bazooka to kill a fly.

Ukraine needs Patriots to defend against the ballistic missiles that Russia sends into Ukrainian cities nearly every day. Perhaps they could be traded for Ukraine's interceptor drones, Zelenskyy said.

To go from Kyiv to the front and back took almost 27 hours. After a train ride of more than eight hours to a station near the eastern city of Kharkiv, Zelenskyy's convoy of vans, SUVs and trucks drove a couple of hours to the Donetsk region along roads covered in netting intended to protect vehicles from strikes by light attack drones.

The vehicles raced past villages with destroyed churches and boarded-up houses at speeds that sometimes reached more than 90 mph. Ruined factories resembled bent Erector sets. Trucks and even a yellow construction excavator had been outfitted with makeshift drone-shielding cages on top and electronic jammers.

During our trip, Zelenskyy first visited soldiers in Druzhkivka, a front-line city with near-daily Russian shelling. His team said it was too dangerous for Hoffman and me to go there, so we were taken to breakfast in nearby Sloviansk.

Zelenskyy made a video in the city square near a statue of a dancing couple that has become a symbol of Ukrainian loss and resilience. Couples used to get married near the statue, called Lover's Monument, including soldiers. Russians recently shelled the square. The monument survived.

Later, as the Ukrainian leader sat through a briefing inside an underground bunker, a Russian guided bomb hit in the distance. Then a first-person-view drone flew above the waiting convoy of vehicles. The driver of the vehicle that Hoffman and I were in reversed quickly to put distance between the vehicles. It was unclear whether the drone was Russian or Ukrainian.

Throughout the day, Zelenskyy maintained coffee. One adviser estimated that the president downed 10 or more cups a day. "No, no," Zelenskyy said when offered water at night. "I will drink coffee."

He traded jokes with the commander in chief, Oleksandr Syrskyi, about how little sleep each man survives on. Zelenskyy said he got an average five hours a night. Syrskyi claimed to get 3-1/2. Zelenskyy said that Syrskyi, in fact, was sleeping only from 3 am to 5 am every day.

I asked Zelenskyy if he had seen President Donald Trump's comments to Politico on Thursday. Trump had again said that Zelenskyy was the real obstacle to reaching peace and that President Vladimir Putin of Russia was ready to make a deal, despite much evidence to the contrary.

Zelenskyy shrugged it off. He is always careful when talking about Trump. Zelenskyy gave a short laugh at the notion of even having to explain the war's roots. "I thought that it's so understandable who is the aggressor and who is not," he said.

He said he had heard different messages from Steve Witkoff, Trump's special envoy, and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law. He credited them with working hard to get a deal done.

Our train pulled into the station at 1:30 am Saturday. By this point, Kyiv had been under an air-raid alert for about 40 minutes. Zelenskyy's vehicle peeled out of the train station as Patriot interceptors boomed in the distance.

That night, the Russians would fire 480 drones and 29 missiles into Ukrainian cities, according to the Ukrainian air force. Ukraine managed to knock down 453 drones and 19 missiles.

Six people were injured in Kramatorsk, including three children, by an aerial bomb. A missile killed 10 people in Kharkiv, including a boy who was in second grade and a girl in eighth grade. Their mothers died alongside them.

**The New York Times**

# The myth of decent platform work

MOHAN MANI AND MADHULIKA T

The year 2025 ended with two significant nationwide work stoppages among platform workers in food delivery and taxi services, targeting deliveries on Christmas and New Year's Eve. The striking workers demanded an end to the 10-minute delivery model, guaranteed minimum earnings, and the elimination of punitive rating systems and arbitrary blocking of workers' IDs. While platform worker unions claimed the strikes were successful, Zomato founder Deepinder Goyal, in a tweet, described them as failure, saying deliveries were unaffected on both days. He further claimed that local law enforcement kept the "miscreants" supporting the strike in check, preventing disruption of delivery work. The central government later required platforms to walk back the 10-minute delivery model – which unions cited as further evidence of the strike's success.

It is noteworthy that while Goyal termed worker-activists supporting the strike as "miscreants" and praised law enforcement for preventing "disruption", unions argued that these workers were exercising their legal right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. India's current labour codes place significant restrictions on the ability of workers to strike, in keeping with the policy emphasis on "ease of doing business". This suggests a government tilt away from trade union freedom, even as workers' right to associate and their freedom of speech remain constitutional guarantees.

Goyal also claimed in a podcast that Zomato terminates the services of around 5,000 workers each month on charges of fraud, and that nearly 1.5-2 lakh workers "voluntarily" leave the company every month, with a similar number joining during the same period. These claims raise several questions about platform work. According to the Annual Report 2024-25 of Eternal, Zomato's parent company, the food delivery business averaged about five lakh onboarded workers during the year. This would imply that Zomato dismissed roughly 10-12% of its workforce annually--an extremely high dismissal rate by industry standards. I raises serious questions about whether due process is followed in these terminations. Such practices would likely affect the emotional and mental well-being of workers living under the Damocles sword of sudden dismissal.

Second, the "voluntary" exit of four to five times the average number of onboarded workers each year indicates that platform work may not constitute decent employment, contrary to claims made repeatedly by both the industry and the government.

How has the Karnataka government addressed these concerns about workers' rights? In the recently enacted Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2025, which seeks to "protect the rights of platform-based Gig workers", the government included several measures relating to social security, transparency, and employment conditions. While the legislation is significant in introducing basic regulatory measures in a sector that currently provides largely unregulated employment to a young urban workforce, its provisions appear to fall short in important aspects.

For instance, in relation to termination of employment, the law merely requires platforms to provide workers with 14 days' notice along with reasons for termination. There is no obligation to conduct a disciplinary enquiry to give worker a meaningful opportunity to defend themselves. The Act would therefore do little to constrain Zomato's practice of dismissing 5000 workers each month --something that a requirement of disciplinary enquiry would likely have made difficult. Significantly, the draft version of the Karnataka law allowed workers to seek redress under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, but this provision was removed from the final version.

The Karnataka law also appears to deny trade unions any meaningful role. The right to seek information from platforms regarding algorithmic decision-making is conferred solely on individual workers with no corresponding right for trade unions. Given the stark imbalance of power between an individual worker and a platform--and the ever-present risk of "deplatforming"--unions would arguably be far better placed to demand such disclosures collectively.

One may conclude that while the Karnataka government has taken an important first step in granting some rights to platform workers, the overall tilt of the legislation is towards preserving "ease of doing business". The likely justification is that stronger regulation might kill the goose that lays golden eggs--even if, for many workers in the sector, this gold turns out to be little more than 'fools gold'.

*(Mohan is a visiting fellow and Madhulika is a research associate, Centre for Labour Studies, NLSIU)*

## OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

**50 YEARS AGO: MARCH 1976**

### Ganga water issue: India has open mind, Bangla told

New Delhi, March 9
India's invitation to Bangla Desh for talks on the utilisation of Ganga Waters at Farakka during the lean season "is open," External Affairs Minister Y. B. Chavan told the Lok Sabha today. "Not only is the invitation open, but our attitude is also one of open-mindedness," he said. Mr. Chavan was answering questions in response to a calling-attention motion on the reported precondition laid down by Bangla Desh for talks on the issue and the stalemate arising out of it.

**25 YEARS AGO: MARCH 2001**

### Criminal misuse of mobile phones on the rise

Bangalore, March 9
Mobile telephone services has made communication faster. But on the flip side, lack of a proper mechanism that markedly establishes the credentials of the cellular mobile telephone customers is contributing to the silent growth of 'perverted intelligence' and 'criminal misuse' of mobile phones in the city. In two somewhat bizarre cases related to the misuse of prepaid cell phones reported in the city, the police are finding it difficult to fathom the magnitude of the threat that is looming large.

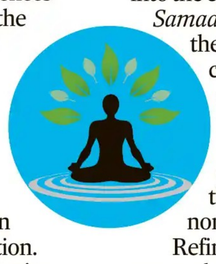
OASIS | JAMUNA RAO

# The personal in mass meditation

On World Youth Day 2026, 30,000 youngsters joined a popular guru in meditation. The large numbers somehow gave the impression that the benefit of the process is uniform for all the participants. This is misleading as the rewards are unique to each person. The theory and philosophy of *yoga* help us to understand this a lot better.

Both *yoga* and meditation are about refining intelligence and consciousness. The benefits then become personal. The physical and calming benefits are merely part of the process.

In both Patanjali's *Yogasutras* and the *Bhagvad Gita*, the process is the path to liberation. Krishna's discourse to Arjuna is deeply philosophical. It gets into the concept of pure consciousness or *purusha*, which comes into being only in conjunction with the material world. It experiences the material world through the sense organs. In doing so it becomes deluded, misled and entangled virtually in the clutches of the illusory material manifestations. Liberating the consciousness from the deviousness and tyranny of the ego is then the main purpose of meditation.



Patanjali talks of first preparing the body and mind for this task. The *Sadhanapada* deals with the afflictions of the body and the need to overcome these through *yoga*. The beginner or the less adept can stop right at this point with ample benefits. This fits into the concept of *Karmayoga*. The *Samadhipada* is about reining in the mind and the confusions of consciousness itself. The *Bhagvad Gita* likewise guides the mind to a state of equanimity. The mind is made calm by contemplating on desire, the object of desire, truth and nonattachment.

Refinement of knowledge happens only when the difference between contemplation and the object being contemplated upon vanishes. The illusion of the material world, the various manifestations and the ability of the ego to misguide, are all sorted out. This is the concept of the *Vibhutipada*. It is also the path of *Janna yoga*.

Beyond this stage, is the *Kaivalya pada*. It deals with *vairagya*, complete renunciation and detachment. This is the point at which intelligence merges with consciousness. The ego ceases to have power over both. It is the state of joy and bliss.

The joy of meditation comes from the total freedom it allows the practitioner. There is no restriction on the path chosen or the time taken to achieve the desired goal. It is an intimately individual choice with unique and ever-surprising rewards.

# Supreme Court seeks policy for jobs to acid attack survivors

## States told to explain absence of rehabilitation schemes

**ASHISH TRIPATHI**
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Monday asked all states and Union Territories (UTs) to apprise it as to why a scheme for the rehabilitation of victims of acid attacks through jobs in government departments or agencies had not been formulated.

"If there are logistical issues in providing government employment to victims of acid attacks, state governments could formulate a policy to pay a subsistence allowance to acid-attack victims," said a bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi.

The court was hearing a plea filed by Shaheen Malik, an acid-attack survivor who was seeking directions to states and authorities for the rehabilitation of those affected by it.

The court said that if logistical issues arose in providing such employment, the concerned state governments should consider proposing the payment of an honorarium equivalent to a subsistence allowance to the victims until suitable rehabilitation measures were implemented.

**COMPLIANCE BID**

- Asks state govts to propose the payment of an honorarium equivalent to a subsistence allowance to the victims, until suitable rehabilitation measures were implemented
- Emphasises that HCs ensure fixing timelines for trial courts in dealing with such cases
- Authorities told to file updated status reports

On the petitioner's request, the bench appointed senior advocate Sidharth Luthra as a pro bono lawyer to represent her.

Earlier, the court granted one final opportunity to state governments and UTs to comply with the directions issued in its order dated January 27, especially regarding effective measures for acid attack victims.

The court also emphasised that high courts ensure closer monitoring and fixing timelines for trial courts in dealing with such cases.

The apex court bench also asked HCs to file affidavits indicating the timeframe within which pending trials were likely to be concluded.

The court said that the case would be taken up for hearing after the concerned authorities and HCs filed their updated status reports on trial timelines and victim support mechanisms.

# SPA expansion: Is Stalin countering anti-incumbency or building support?

**E T B SIVAPRIYAN**
CHENNAI, DHNS

DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA), stitched together in 2019 with about a dozen political parties as a front against the BJP and AIADMK, has won every election it has contested since then, posting a stupendous performance.

Yet Chief Minister M K Stalin has been further expanding the SPA ahead of the 2026 assembly elections by inducting the late Vijayakanth's Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK), and about half a dozen smaller parties that wield influence among several communities. Actor Kamal Haasan's Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) joined the SPA in 2014.

The seven-year-old alliance now comprises at least 21 political parties -- some influential only in particular regions.

Stalin addresses a gathering during a public meeting, in Tiruvallur district. PTI

This is also the first time in Tamil Nadu that an alliance has remained intact and is preparing to face its fourth general election in a row.

The developments in the DMK camp raise the question: is the ruling party simply consolidating its alliance to get battle-ready for an intense four-cornered contest, or are these moves aimed primarily at countering anti-incumbency against the Stalin government?

The ruling DMK is walking the extra mile by allotting seats to the new alliance partners, even reducing the number of seats it will itself contest. At the same time, it is mulling the reduction of one or two seats for existing allies whose strike rate in the 2021 elections fell short.

The party has also roped in several organisations that represent castes that are numerically small but could hold the key to victory in many constituencies across the state. The SPA faces a formidable AIADMK–BJP combine on one side, the new entrant Vijay with his popular fanbase, and Seeman's Naam Tamizhar on the other, in the April–May assembly elections.

Opposition parties allege that the DMK fears losing the elections despite possessing a "winning alliance," and that this is precisely why the party is expanding the combine. In pursuit of ensuring victory, the DMK's oft-repeated claim that it is an "ideological alliance" has become a casualty. DMDK, after all, was part of the BJP-led alliance in both 2014 and 2019.

DMK leaders told *DH* that they were unwilling to take any chances in this crucial election -- this is the first time since 1971 that the party's chances of winning a consecutive term look bright -- and that they were therefore bringing in parties that may wield influence only in a handful of constituencies.

"Every vote counts. This is what prompted us to expand our already winning alliance. In an intense four-cornered contest, the winner may be decided by as few as 500 or 1,000 votes. Voter behaviour in multi-cornered contests cannot be predicted," a senior leader said.

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**NGEF (Hubli) LTD., Dharwad-580 009,**
**NGEF** (HUBLI) LTD. (A GOVT OF KARNATAKA ENTERPRISES) **P.B.Road, Rayapur, Dharwad-580 009**
**CIN : U85110ka1989PLC009887**
**Mobile No : 9483674900/907/910/904/897, Tel / Telefax : 0836-2322658**
**e-mail : mdngef@yahoo.com , Website : www.ngefhubli.com**

New Government Electrical Factory (Hubli) Ltd, ಧಾರವಾಡ ವತಿಯಿಂದ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ EOI ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.

| S.No | Tendor No | Tender Last Date |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | NGEFHL/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_2 | 23.03.2026 |
| 2 | NGEFHL/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_3 | 23.03.2026 |
| 3 | NGEFHL/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_4 | 16.03.2026 |

Further information please visit Websight : https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

**Sd/-Managing Director**
**NGEF(Hubli) Ltd.Dharwad**

ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಇ/ಧಾರವಾಡ/1330/ದೇಶಪಾಂಡೆಪಬ್ಲಿಸಿಟಿ/2025–26

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ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರಕಾರ
**ಧಾರವಾಡ ಮಾನಸಿಕ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ನರವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ, ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಧಾರವಾಡ.**
Phone No: **0836-2447055** email: **director.dimhans@gmail.com, aaodimhans@gmail.com**
ಸಂ:ಡಿಮ್ಹಾನ್ಸ್/ಸರಬ/83/84/2025-26 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 07/03/2026

**ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಇ–ಪ್ರೋಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ)**

2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ಒಂದು ವರ್ಷದ ಅವಧಿಯವರೆಗೆ ಧಾರವಾಡ ಮಾನಸಿಕ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ನರವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ (ಡಿಮ್ಹಾನ್ಸ್), ಧಾರವಾಡಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಶ್ಯಕವಿರುವ ವಿವಿಧ ಮಾನವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ & ಭದ್ರತಾ ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ ಸೇವೆ ಇ–ಪ್ರೋಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು ವಿವರ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ.

1. DME/2025-26/SE0681: Security Guard Service
2. DME/2025-26/SE0683: NON Clinical Service

ಅರ್ಹ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಂದ ದ್ವಿ–ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಎಲ್ಲಾ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಮೇಲ್ಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ಬಿಡ್ ನಂ: ಇ–ಪ್ರೋಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಅರ್ಜಿಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಇನ್ನು ಉಳಿದ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು,
ಡಿಮ್ಹಾನ್ಸ ಧಾರವಾಡ

ವಾಸಾಸಂ೫/ಧಾರವಾಡ/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/1325/2025–26

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**Government of Karnataka**
**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**
**RURAL DEVELOPMENT PANCHAYAT RAJ**
**Engineering project Division KALABURAGI**

No : EE/RDPRE/PD/KLB/KKRDB /TS/TND/2025-26/952 Date : 04-03-2026

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION**
**(Through E-procurement Single Cover System)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Name of work & Amount put to tender | 1) KRRDA/2025-26/BG/WORK_INDENT325 APT-Rs. 33,45,371.42 2)KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT326 APT-46,29,836.84 |
| 2. | Head of account | 2025-26 Years 5054 General |
| 3. | Class of Contractor | Class-III & above |
| 4. | Issue of Blank Tender Documents | 04-03-2026 to 12-03.2026 upto 4.00 pm |
| 5. | Tender Form Fee | As per KPPP Norms |
| 6. | E.M.D. Fee | As Mentioned in KPPP Portal |
| 7. | Receipt of completed tender documents | 04-03-2026 to 12-03-2026 upto 4.00 pm |
| 8. | Technical Bid Opening Date | 13-03-2026 After 4.01 pm |
| 9. | Financial Bid opening Date | 13-03-2026 After 4.01 pm |
| 10. | For more details contact | Office of the Executive Engineer, R.D. P.R.E. Project Division Rajapur Road Kalaburagi |
| 11. | Website Address | www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in |

**Sd/- Udaykumar Houde**
Executive Engineer
R.D. P.R.E. Project Division
Kalaburagi

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**BENGALURU-MYSURU INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDOR AREA PLANNING AUTHORITY**
No. 5, Second Floor, Looplane, Race Course Road, Bengaluru - 560009.
Phone: 080-22341230/35 E-mail: bmicapa@gmail.com

**No:BMICAPA/CLU-03/104/2025-26/2790 Date: 07-03-2026**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**(UNDER SEC 14(A) OF KTCP ACT, 1961)**

**M/s. EMINENCE VENTURES** Represented by its Managing Partner **Mr. Akif Ahad S/o Mukthar Ahamed** has applied to this Authority seeking Change of land use from **"Agriculture"** Zone to **"Residential"** purpose pertaining to Sy.No: **181/1** extent of 0 Acre - 08 Guntas, **181/4** extent of 0 Acre - 08 Guntas, **Sy.No: 181/5** extent of 0 Acre - 15 Guntas, **Sy.No: 181/6** extent of 0 Acre - 05 Guntas, **Sy.No: 181/7** extent of 0 Acre - 05 Guntas, **Sy.No: 181/9** extent of 0 Acre - 08 Guntas, **Sy.No: 181/12** extent of 0 Acre - 01 Guntas and **Sy.No: 181/13** extent of 0 Acre - 04 Guntas Totally measuring **01 Acre - 14 Guntas** of **Hampapura Village,** Kasaba Hobli, Srirangapatna Taluk, Mandya District under Sec 14(A) of KTCP Act 1961. The foresaid lands are reserved for **Agriculture Zone** in Approved Master Plan. Applicant has stated that the change of land use sought is in the interest of public by quoting the following:

1) If this land is Developed and Layout formed, sites will be available at reasonable rates to General Public.
2) If this land is Developed Job Opportunities will be available to all sector of Labourers.
3) If this land is Developed, then the surrounding area will also get Developed.
4) If the Development of Layout takes place, the public are benefited with the civic amenities such as good roads, UGD, Electrical facilities and Parks etc.,

Objections, if any, are invited from the public, any person may file his / her objection to **Member Secretary, BMICAPA, Bengaluru** in writing to the above address mentioned in this publication within 15 days from this notice. Any objections received after stipulated time will not be considered.

**Sd/- Member Secretary,**
**B.M.I.C.A.P.A., Bengaluru.**

DIPR/CP/6097/Adverto/2025-26

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**BENGALURU SMART INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED (B-SMILE)**
Office of the Chief Engineer-02,
No.30/1, Thimmaiah Road, Millar Tank Bund Area,
Vasanthnagara, Bengaluru - 560051.

**No: B-SMILE/CE-02/TEND/12/2025-26 Date: 09-03-2026**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**
**(Least Cost Selection - KC-8) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)**

The Chief Engineer-02, B-SMILE, GBA, Bengaluru invites Proposals from reputed Consultants who are having relevant experience for the work detailed below.

| Sl. No. | Name of the Work |
|---|---|
| 1 | Identification, Feasibility Study and Survey of Rajakaluve and Lake Buffer including Reconnaissance Survey, Preparation of Land Acquisition Proposal, Topographical Survey, Marking of ROW, Drawings, Land Plan Survey, Boundary Pillar, Geometric Design, Strip Plan, Junction Design, Longitudinal Section and Cross Section etc. (Approximately 425 Km) pertaining to Protection, Improvement of Rajakaluve and Lake Buffer area including Service Road in Bengaluru City. **EMD Amount (in Rs.): 2,00,000/-** |

**Calendar of Events:** **1)** Tender Documents can be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 09-03-2026 at 17.30 Hours onwards. 2)** Date of Pre Bid Meeting: **16-03-2026 at 15.00 Hours. 3)** Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders: **25-03-2026 upto 16.00 Hours. 4)** Date and Time for Opening of Technical Bid: **26-03-2026 at 16.30 Hours. 5)** Date and Time for Opening of Financial Bid: **Will be intimated after obtaining Approval for Technical Evaluation.** Further details can be had from the above office.

**Sd/- Chief Engineer-02, B-SMILE, GBA.**

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**GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA**
**ZILLA PANCHAYATH, BELLARY**
**Office of the Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Bellary.**

**No. EE/PRED/BLY/AE-1/Various Heads/2025-26/ Dt. 06-03-2026.**

**Short Tender Notification (Through KPPP Portal only)**

On behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka tenders are invited from the eligible contractors who have enrolled in Panchayath Raj Engineering Department for 09 works comprising of approved Road, Bridge and Building works under 2025-26 ZP Building and Maintenance, 2025-26 CMIDP Works and 2024-25 CM Special Grant through KPPP portal.

Indent No.

**1.RDPR/2025-26/IND13791**
**2.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24141/CALL-3**
**3.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24441/CALL-3**
**4.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24440/CALL-3**
**5.RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT24426/CALL-3**
**6.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT23288/CALL-3**
**7.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24269/CALL-3**
**8.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24442/CALL-3**
**9.RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT24229/CALL-3**

Contractors are required to submit the tender before 16-03-2026 at 4.30 PM by uploading the relevant documents through KPPP portal website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in by downloading the formats for submission of tenders from 06-03-2026 to 16-03-2026 at 4.30 PM. Tenders will be opened through KPPP portal on 17-03-2026 at 5.30 PM Any changes in the notification will be published KPPP website only. Accepting/rejection of tenders without assigning reason is reserved. Any details can be obtained in person at the office or through telephone No. 08392-266173.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer,**
**Panchayath Raj Engineering Division Ballari**

**DIPR/Ballari/1107/KSMCA/2025-26**

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**Tumakuru City Corporation, Tumakuru**
**Website: www.tumakurucity.mrc.gov.in**
**Phone No:2278480, Fax: 2275106 e-mail : itstaff_ulb_tumkur@yahoo.com Grievance: 0816-2272200, 2271200**

No:TCC/Engineer Section/Civil/CR/23/2025-26 DATED: 05.03.2026

**Tender Notification**

The Executive Engineer, Tumakuru City Corporation, Tumakuru invites tenders as per the KTPP act 1999-2000 through KPPP portal for Corporation Grant work Sl No 11 and 12 7days in Remaining 15 Days work for tenders Eligible Contractors with PWD License certificate can Participate in the Tender.

Contractors can download and submit the tenders through KPPP portal http/kppp.karnataka.gov.in Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Calendar of Events and other information are as follows:

1. Date of reciept of Tenders : 05-03-2026. 2. Last Date for Submission of Tenders : 20-03-2026 at 4.30 pm. 3. Pre-Bid Meeting : 11-03-2026 at 11.30 am. 4. Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids) : 23-03-2026 at 4.35pm. 5. Date of Opening of Tenders (Financial Bids) : 25-03-2026 at 10.30 am. Postponement of calendar of events (if any) is only Through KPPP portal and will not be published in newspapers.

**Sd/-** Executive Engineer,
Tumakur City Corporation Tumakuru

DIPR/TUM/479/KSMCA/2025-26

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**BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION**
Office of the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division,
16th Floor, PU Building, MG Road, Bengaluru-01

**No. BCCC/EE/ELE/TEND/04/2025-26 Date : 09-03-2026**

**INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)**
**(Single Cover / Short Term) (Through GOK KPP Portal Only)**

The Executive Engineer (Ele), BCCC, invites Tenders in accordance with KTPP rules 2000, from eligible contractors registered in Bengaluru Central City Corporation / KPWD / CPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any other equivalent central / State Government Organizations on behalf of the Commissioner, BCCC for Electrical work as detailed in the table.

| Sl. | Name of the Work |
|---|---|
| | **Others** |
| 1 | Providing Decorative illumination to selected major roads and circles, BBMP Head Office under Bengaluru Central City Corporation on account of Bengaluru Karaga-2026 Festivity. **Amount put to Tender :** Rs. 28.92 Lakhs, **EMD :** Rs. 58,000/- |
| 2 | Providing Decorative illumination to Shri Dharmaraya Swamy Temple surrounding areas, Old city area, Sampangi Tank and Important Karaga routes on account of Bengaluru Karaga-2026 Festivity. **Amount put to Tender :** Rs. 10.14 Lakhs, **EMD :** Rs. 25,500/- |

**Calendar of Events : (1)** Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from : **10.03.2026 by 16.30 hrs (2)** Bids must be submitted online through the KPP Portal on or before **17.03.2026 by 16.00 hours. (3)** Date of Opening of tenders **18.03.2026 at 16.00 hours.**

**Sd/- Executive Engineer (Ele.),**
**Bengaluru Central City Corporation**

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**Office of the Director, Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA)**
9th Floor, Vishweshwaraiah Towers, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560 001. Telephone: 080-22867172/ 22866302 Fax: 080-22863576/ 22861665
e-mail: dmablr@gmail.com
Website: www.municipaladmn.gov.in

**No: 1472186/DMA/DEV/AMRT/44/2024 Date: 09.03.2026**

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**

Directorate of Municipal Administration, Karnataka intends to invite proposals from qualified Credit Rating Agency for the following work.

| Sl. No. | Notification No. | Description of work |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | DMA/2025-26/ SE5177/Call 3 | Consulting Services for Carrying out Credit Rating for 36 ULBs in Package 2 (North) |

**Calendar of Events:** 1) Tender document publishing date: **09.03.2026.** 2) Pre-bid meeting: **13.03.2026.** 3) Last Date for receipt of Proposals: **23.03.2026.** 4) Opening of Technical Proposals: **24.03.2026.** 5) Presentation on Approach and Methodology: **27.03.2026.** 6) Opening of Financial Proposals: **Will be communicated directly to the Consultants qualifying the Technical Evaluation.**

Link to **KPP Portal - https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

**Note:** Please contact for any additional information and clarifications (during the office hours only)

**Joint Director Development,**
10th Floor, DMA, V.V. Towers, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560 001. Contact Number: 080-22863731
e-mail address: dmablr.jdd1@gmail.com

**Sd/-**
**Director**
**Directorate of Municipal Administration, Bengaluru.**

DIPR/CP/6093/MAA/2025-26

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**Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited**
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

***TENDER NOTIFICATION***

**(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)**

**No. CEE/Tr.(Op)ZH/SEE(O)/AEE-2/FA-54& A56 /2025-26/15067-70 Date: 09.03.2026**

KPTCL invites bids through KPP Portal mode for the following works.

Tender No. **KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT3442**

Combined package for following works on PTK basis:

**1.**"Providing additional 1X10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer at 110/11kV **McGann Hospital** sub-station in Shivamogga Taluk & District-Work Code-CD1120".

**2.**"Providing additional 1X10MVA,110/11kV Power Transformer at 110/11kV **Gajanur** sub-station in Shivamogga Taluk & District-Work Code-CD1121".

**Note:** 10 MVA PTR and 11kV switchgear will be supplied by KPTCL for above works.

The bids will be received through E-Procurement mode only. The detailed notification regarding subject enquiry in the E-Tendering process can be obtained by logging KPTCL Website: **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** on hyperlink **"E Procurement KPTCL"** or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **10.03.2026.** Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours.

**Sd/- Chief Engineer(Electy.,),**
**Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, 3rd Floor, Prasarana Bhavana, Santhepete, B.M. Road, Hassan - 573201.**

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**punjab national bank** ...the name you can BANK upon!
**पंजाब नैशनल बैंक** ...भरोसे का प्रतीक!
(A Government of India Undertaking)
GSAD Dept, 6-1-73, Second Floor, Saeed Plaza, Lakdi-Ka-Pul, Z O, Hyderabad- 500004
E-mail: zohydgad@pnb.co.in TEL: 040-23235213, 23235215

**EMPANELMENT NOTICE**

**Punjab National Bank, Zonal Office, Hyderabad** invites **"Applications for Empanelment of contractors for supply, installation, testing and commissioning of Solar Rooftop System** at various offices/branches of Bank under the jurisdiction of Zonal Office: Hyderabad (i.e, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana & Karnataka State).

The details of eligibility, terms & conditions and application forms are available on Bank's **website https://www.pnbindia.in/Tender.aspx which may be downloaded from 10:00 hrs on 10.03.2026.**

The duly completed documents in the prescribed format with all supporting documents shall be submitted to **"Asst. General Manager, General Administration Department, 2nd Floor, Saeed Plaza, Lakdikapul, Hyderabad 500004 latest by 23.03.2026 upto 5.00 PM."**

Any corrigendum/ clarification in respect of the above said work shall be released only on above said Bank's website, which may be visited regularly.

**Asst. General Manager**

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Government of Karnataka
**RURAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY & SANITAION DEPARTEMENT, DIVISION, CHITRADURGA .**
Phone No.: 08194-234488 e-mail: eerdwsd.chd@gmail.com

Tender Notification No: EE/RDWS&SD/CTA//Tender/ 1770 /2025-26/ Date:06.03.2026

**Tender Notification**
**Through e-procurement**

Tender has been invited for the following work in Two cover system through kppp-procurement. Eligible tenders may obtain the details and tender documents and submitted the filled tender online through website view.http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Hiring of Outsource employies to Chitradurga Division, 06 Taluks and 03 Water Tensting Labs Rs. 129.00 Lakhs Last Date for Receipt of Bids Dt: 23.03.2026, Technical Bid Opening 24.03.2026 and Financial Bid Opening 25.03.2026 For Further details Office of Executive Engineer and also through e-port web site http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/ 749/2025-26

**Sd/- Executive Engineer**
**RDWS&S Division, Chitradurga**

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**ಪುರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ**
**ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ–562110**

ನಂ.ದೇಪು/ತಾ.ಶಾ/ಟಿ.ಪ್ರ/ಸಿಆರ್/02/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 09.03.2026

**ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ** (ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪೋರ್ಟಾಲ್) ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ)
(ಸ್ಟಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ **KW-1 & 2** ರ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳಂತೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ)

ಮೇಲ್ಕಂಡ ವಿಷಯ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ, ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ ಪುರಸಭಾ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪುರಸಭಾ ಅನುದಾನದಡಿ ಪೈಪ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಪೇವರ್ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಡಾಂಬರ್ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಚರಂಡಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಪೇವರ್ಸ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಕರ್ಬ್ ಸ್ಟೋನ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮಾಡುವುದು, ತಂತಿ ಬೇಲಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಸಿ.ಸಿ. ಟಿ.ವಿ ಕ್ಯಾಮರಾ ಅಳವಡಿಸುವುದು, ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿ ಕೊರೆಯುವುದು, ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಪಂಪು ಮೋಟಾರ್ ಮತ್ತು ಅವಶ್ಯಕ ಸಾಮಾಗ್ರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅಳವಡಿಸುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಒಟ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತ **ರೂ : 212.47 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ** ಒಟ್ಟು 14 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂಮೆಂಟ್‌ನ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಏಕ ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತೆಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್: **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವುದು. ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: (As per KPPP Portal ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: (As per KPPP Portal) ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಪುರಸಭೆಯ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಾಖೆಯನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/–
ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ದುರ್ಗಾಶ್ರೀ.
ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು
ಪುರಸಭೆ, ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ

ಸಹಿ/–
ಶಿವಮೂರ್ತಿ ಎ. (ಕೆ.ಎಂ.ಎ.ಎಸ್)
ಮುಖ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿ
ಪುರಸಭೆ, ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ

ವಾಸಾಸಂ೫/ವಾಪ್ರ/6104/ಎಸ್‌ಎಸ್‌ಸಿ/2025–26

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**Government of Karnataka**
**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**
**RURAL DEVELOPMENT PANCHAYAT RAJ**
**Engineering project Division KALABURAGI**

No : EE/RDPRE/PD/KLB/KKRDB /TS/TND/2025-26/951 Date : 04-03-2026

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION**
**(Through E-procurement Two Cover System)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Name of work & Amount put to tender | 1) KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT312 APT- Rs. 80,01,994.53 2)KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT321 APT- Rs.73,58,758.09 3)KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT324 APTt-Rs. 79,90,275.51 KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT317 APT-Rs.54,65,878.75 |
| 2. | Head of account | 2025-26 year 5054 General |
| 3. | Class of Contractor | Class-III & above |
| 4. | Issue of Blank Tender Documents | 04-03-2026 to 12-03.2026 upto 4.00 pm |
| 5. | Tender Form Fee | As per KPPP Norms |
| 6. | E.M.D. Fee | As Mentioned in KPPP Portal |
| 7. | Receipt of completed tender documents | 04-03-2026 to 12-03-2026 upto 4.00 pm |
| 8. | Technical Bid Opening Date | 13-03-2026 After 4.01 pm |
| 9. | Financial Bid opening Date | 16-03-2026 After 11.00 pm |
| 10. | For more details contact | Office of the Executive Engineer, R.D. P.R.E. Project Division Rajapur Road Kalaburagi |
| 11. | Website Address | www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in |

**Sd/- Udaykumar Houde**
Executive Engineer
R.D. P.R.E. Project Division
Kalaburagi

# Ganapathy: The Maoist leader police want to surrender

## Despite stepping down in 2018, Lakshman Rao remains influential in insurgent circles

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Whether Telangana Director General of Police (DGP) B Shivadhaar Reddy or Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy speaks on Maoist activities, one name keeps surfacing. Both have repeatedly and openly urged Muppala Lakshman Rao, a veteran Maoist leader known as Ganapathy, to surrender.

Though the 75 or 76-year-old reportedly "retired" from the movement years ago due to age and health-related issues like severe asthma and diabetes, his influence lingers at the highest levels of both security forces and Maoist ranks.

So, what makes Ganapathy so pivotal? Shivadhaar Reddy recently noted intelligence placing him not in the jungles, but in an urban hideout. Efforts continue to bring him into the mainstream.

Born in Sarangapur of old Karimnagar in Telangana, he tops security forces' wanted lists for his hand in attacks. It is understood he had almost 50 cases pending against him across states.

Ganapathy spent nearly four decades underground, shaping the insurgency's ideology and strategy.

Embracing Naxalite thought in the 1970s, he climbed the ranks to become general secretary of the CPI (Maoist) after the 2004 merger of major factions. He held the role until 2018, stepping down for health reasons, but maintaining ties to the leadership and its core framework.

More than a guerrilla commander, Ganapathy built the modern Maoist movement, transforming scattered regional groups into a unified, pan-Indian threat.

His signature achievement was the 2004 merger of the People's War Group (PWG) in the South with the Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) in the North.

He saw that the state police could crush local outfits, but a national-level CPI (Maoist) would strain federal resources.

The "Compact Revolutionary Zone"—a vision for a continuous influence belt from Nepal to Andhra Pradesh—emerged under his guidance, noted a top anti-Naxal operations source.

Unlike successor Nambala Keshava Rao alias Basavaraju, a tactical IED and formations expert, Ganapathy shaped the "Party Program" bridging Charu Majumdar's old revolutionary ideals and 21st-century realities, the source explained.

"If he surrenders before the Union home minister, it will be the most significant psychological victory for the Indian state in the 50 year history of the insurgency. It would signal that even the 'Godfather' of the movement saw no viable future in the armed struggle," added the aforementioned source.

# New US Consul General takes charge in Chennai

Mariana L Neisuler

**CHENNAI, DHNS:** Seasoned diplomat Mariana L Neisuler has assumed charge of the United States Consulate General Chennai, succeeding Christopher W Hodges.

"Under President Donald Trump, Secretary Marco Rubio, and Ambassador Gor's leadership, we are focused on strengthening partnerships that deliver real results for both Americans and Indians. I look forward to expanding trade ties, supporting American businesses, and fostering the people-to-people connections that make our relationship so strong," Neisuler said.

Neisuler assumed office on March 2. The Consulate General in Chennai serves TN, Karnataka, Kerala, Puducherry, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep.

Before arriving in Chennai, Neisuler served as the Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs at the US Embassy in Tashkent. She previously served as the Deputy Economic Counselor at the embassies in Jerusalem and Amman, as well as in postings in Washington DC, Dubai, Skopje and Moscow.

In Washington, Neisuler served as the Senior South Asia Officer focused on India and Sri Lanka in the Energy Resources Bureau.

# 4 Assam Cong workers held with anti-govt 'chargesheet'

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The Assam Police arrested four Congress workers while they were allegedly transporting 10 lakh copies of the Opposition party's "20-point charge sheet" against the BJP government as well as Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

The "chargesheet" was released by Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi and others in Guwahati on February 19. Its copies were being transported for distribution during the campaigning for next month's Assembly elections.

In the "chargesheet", the party levelled several allegations — including those of "massive corruption" and failure to fulfil pre-poll promises — against the ruling dispensation. It also alleged that Sarma acquired 12,000 bighas of land in his kin's name.

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee chief and Lok Sabha member Gaurav Gogoi said the copies were seized by personnel from the Dispur Police Station in Guwahati.

"The BJP is running an authoritarian regime and preventing the Opposition from taking the chargesheet against the government to the people. But the people of Assam are now aware of their corruption and will give a fitting reply in 2026," he said.

Gogoi told reporters in New Delhi on Monday: "The Assam CM tries to portray himself as a brave and powerful leader. But today, some pamphlets published by the Assam Congress have been seized by Sarma's police. The CM was so frightened by a few sheets that he had them confiscated by the police."

He added: "The BJP has failed to fulfil the promises it made to the people of Assam. The chargesheet highlighting its failures has been seized."

The Congress, meanwhile, said it would take legal steps for the four workers' release.

The police said the items were seized as they contained "serious allegations" against the chief minister

# Over 12 crore rural households now have tap water under JJM mission: Centre

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Minister of State of Jal Shakti V Somanna on Monday informed the Rajya Sabha that more than 12.58 crore additional rural households have been provided with tap water connections under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

When the scheme was launched in August 2019, only 3.23 crore (16.7%) rural households were reported to have tap water connections. As of March 3, 2026, under JJM, more than 12.58 crore additional rural households have been provided with tap water connections," he said in his written reply in the Upper House.

Thus, as of March 3, 2026, out of around 19.36 crore rural households in the country, around 15.82 crore (81.71%) households are reported to have tap water supply in their homes, he added.

The government said it is committed to making provision for a safe and potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality, and on a regular and long-term basis to all rural households in the country, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 6.1 that seeks to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030.

To further the objectives of JJM, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget, announced an extension of the JJM until 2028, Somanna said.

States and Union Territories have also been advised to install community water purification plants (CWPPs), especially in arsenic- and fluoride-affected habitations, to provide potable water for drinking and cooking requirements until piped water supply schemes compliant with JJM standards are commissioned, he said.

# MISCELLANY

## ◆ COMICS ◆

### Blondie

DADDY, HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED BEING A SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER?
NOT REALLY, WHY?
THERE'S A HUGE AUDIENCE WHO THINKS IT'S RELAXING TO WATCH PEOPLE SIT AROUND DOING NOTHING! YOU COULD BE A BIG HIT!
I'M NOT SURE HOW TO TAKE THAT

### Hagar The Horrible

### Beetle Bailey

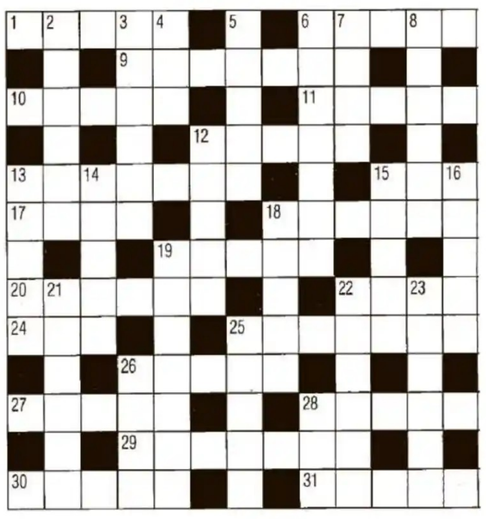
### Peanuts

OH, YOU'RE A FINE ONE, YOU ARE! I'VE ALWAYS BEEN NICE TO YOU, BUT DID YOU CARE?
NO, YOU DIDN'T! AND NOW A NEW GIRL MOVES IN AND SMILES ONCE AT YOU, AND YOU GIVE HER YOUR BLANKET!
OH, YOU'RE A FINE ONE YOU ARE! YOU KNOW WHAT I HOPE? I HOPE YOU HAVE A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN, THAT'S WHAT I HOPE!!
YOU MUST BE A GOOD HOPER...

### Marvin

WHY DOES JEFF WALK BITSY EVERY NIGHT?
IF HE DOESN'T GET HIS ENERGY OUT, HE GETS OVERANXIOUS AND OBNOXIOUS TO BE AROUND
YOU MEAN BITSY OR JEFF?

## CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12370



**CRYPTIC**

**ACROSS**
1 Minor branch organised by prigs (5)
6 Little creatures are found in such groups (5)
9 Language learnable from a lexicon? (7)
10 Shane, looking pale? (5)
11 Where a Bohemian girl receives a letter? (5)
12 Having benefited from crude treatment? (5)
13 Betray Les wickedly to a boor (4,3)
15 A welcome piece of material? (3)
17 Furthermore, a cross word? (4)
18 Sausages shared by a girl with a friend (6)
19 Like a fielder's foolish point? (5)
20 Be agreeable, we take it (6)
22 Something long told (4)
24 Haymaking cry? (3)
25 It's unlike him to be late at work (7)
26 Where nothing may be torn out (5)
27 The beast upsets tots around the day centre (5)
28 Left youngsters out of societies (5)
29 Like that half broken finger Paul has! (7)
30 Like a gardener's fingers (5)
31 Cup from Derry? (5)

**DOWN**
2 Petals possess such shades (6)
3 Of reformed ladies? (6)
4 The snare of strong drink? (3)
5 Refreshment is but a street away (5)
6 Speak about a new mode eventually (4,3)
7 She rebuilt part of Seven Dials (4)
8 One is beaten resoundingly (and repeatedly?) (3-3)
12 Be successful in shortening the thing? (3,2)
13 Moisten a few flowers? (5)
14 What a rotten churl may leave you in? (5)
15 She turns up with a title (5)
16 The great man; look it up with Nat, perhaps (5)
18 Dead snail? (5)
19 Ancient skill in bridge-building (7)
21 In American terminology, an easy pace (6)
22 It has been consumed in the nick of time (6)
23 Place one's shirt at risk? (6)
25 What a climber may do for a bit of fun during a test (5)
26 A pet source of music? (4)
28 The miserable dog is insecure (3)

**ACROSS**
1 Maker of bread (5)
6 Caribbean dance (5)
9 Wash and iron (7)
10 Spring bulb (5)
11 Gangway (5)
12 Chairs (5)
13 Hand over (7)
15 In favour of (3)
17 Single entity (4)
18 Falling star (6)
19 Tree type (5)
20 Newspaper boss (6)
22 Hare's tail (4)
24 Feeling unhappy (3)
25 Strive, contend (7)
26 Anteroom (5)
27 Hairdresser's shop (5)
28 Maths chart (5)
29 Venerates (7)
30 Brimless cap (5)
31 Lawful (5)

**DOWN**
2 Insight (6)
3 Give rise to (6)
4 Knock (3)
5 Bury (5)
6 Tanned hide (7)
7 Plant (4)
8 Spanish dance (6)
12 Cut off (5)
13 The fists, slang (5)
14 Furious (5)
15 Freedom from war (5)
16 Address the public (5)
18 Army officer (5)
19 Small crown (7)
21 Harm (6)
22 Scattered, scanty (6)
23 Perfect society (6)
25 Surrenders (5)
26 Golfer's cry (4)
28 Hair product (3)

**SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12369**

**CRYPTIC**
**ACROSS:** 3, T-h-ugs 8, Attic 10, LIV-I'd 11, Run 12, C-rook 13, Senegal 15, Well-y 18, Rep. 19, Reside 21, Man-ager 22, AWOL 23, Be-ar 24, Slipper 26, Twenty 29, Ear 31, Ho.-sea 32, Scra-p-ed 34, AB-out 35, Tee 36, P-earl 37, Depth 38, See-k-s.
**DOWN:** 1, Strew 2, Miner-Al 4, Hurl 5, G-lower 6, Sikes 7, Field 9, Tun 12, Cap-ably 14, Gen. 16, Liner 17, Y-earn 19, Respect 20, Faith 21, More-S 23, Be-rated 24, Stable 25, Par 27, Wo-men 28, Near-S 30, Teeth 32, Suck 33, Pep.

**EASY**
**ACROSS:** 3, Leaps 8, Error 10, Resin 11, Ban 12, Miser 13, Lateral 15, Futon 18, Fat 19, Remote 21, Monitor 22, Ewer 23, Stag 24, Defaces 26, Settee 29, Tom 31, Easel 32, Venison 34, Nudes 35, Nod 36, Blood 37, Danes 38, Rends.
**DOWN:** 1, Urban 2, Done for 4, Evil 5, Prefer 6, Serum 7, Pilot 9, Rat 12, Matinee 14, Ran 16, Toots 17, Neigh 19, Rotates 20, Tease 21, Melts 23, Seminar 24, Delude 25, Con 27, Early 28, Tenor 30, Rodeo 32, Vend 33, Son.

## ◆SU-DO-KU-6850◆

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 9 | | | 7 | 4 | 8 | | |
| 8 | | | | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| 1 | | | | | | 3 | | 9 |
| | | 9 | | | | | | 8 |
| | | 2 | 7 | | 5 | 1 | | |
| 6 | | | | | | 5 | | |
| 2 | | 5 | | | | | | 4 |
| 9 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 | | | | 6 |
| | | 6 | 1 | 4 | | | 8 | |

easy

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 |
| 5 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| 7 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 9 |
| 6 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 3 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| 1 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| 8 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 2 |
| 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 1 |

**SOLUTION TO 6849**

**To solve the puzzle:** To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

## SCRABBLE™

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| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | 3rd Letter Triple | RACK 1 |
| Y4 | W4 | O1 | S1 | D2 | D2 | O1 | | |
| | | | | | | | | RACK 2 |
| B3 | E1 | M3 | E1 | D2 | W4 | O1 | | |
| | | | | | | | 5th Letter Double | RACK 3 |
| H4 | R1 | T1 | U1 | O1 | E1 | M3 | | |
| | | | | | | | Double Word Score | RACK 4 |
| D2 | C3 | L1 | N1 | E1 | U1 | I1 | | |

PAR SCORE 145-155
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

**YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| E1 X8 T1 R1 U1 D2 E1 | RACK 1 = | 95 |
| G2 R1 A1 Y4 S1 | RACK 2 = | 9 |
| P3 O1 L1 I1 T1 Y4 | RACK 3 = | 11 |
| C3 R1 A1 P3 P3 I1 E1 | RACK 4 = | 76 |
| PAR SCORE 125-135 | JUDD'S TOTAL | 191 |

## JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

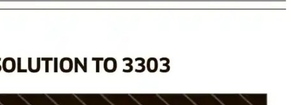
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

URHYR

SLHUF

LELACO

GNIDIO


I need everyone single file. Let me know your size and what shift you work.
They should make you the "take-charge nurse".
This won't take long.
THEY DISTRIBUTED THE HOSPITAL ATTENDANTS NEW UNIFORMS IN AN ---
8/29

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PLUSH CLIFF GROOVY UNTOLD
Answer: The captain kept info about each destination's docking details in his — PORTFOLIO

## HITORI-3304

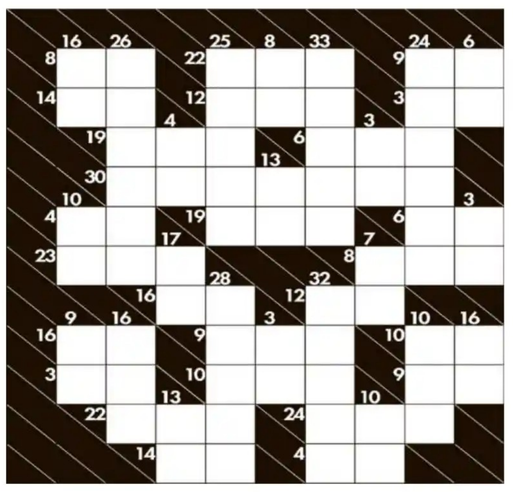
| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| 8 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 4 |
| 8 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| 1 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| 3 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 4 |
| 4 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 1 |

**SOLUTION TO 3303**

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ■ | 3 | 7 | 1 | ■ | 2 | 8 | ■ |
| 1 | 7 | ■ | 3 | 6 | ■ | 2 | 4 |
| 2 | ■ | 4 | ■ | 1 | 5 | ■ | 3 |
| 5 | 2 | 6 | 8 | ■ | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| 7 | ■ | 1 | ■ | 4 | 3 | ■ | 2 |
| 3 | 1 | ■ | 4 | 7 | ■ | 5 | ■ |
| ■ | 6 | 2 | ■ | 8 | 1 | 4 | 7 |
| 8 | 5 | ■ | 2 | 3 | ■ | 1 | ■ |

**To solve the puzzle:** Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

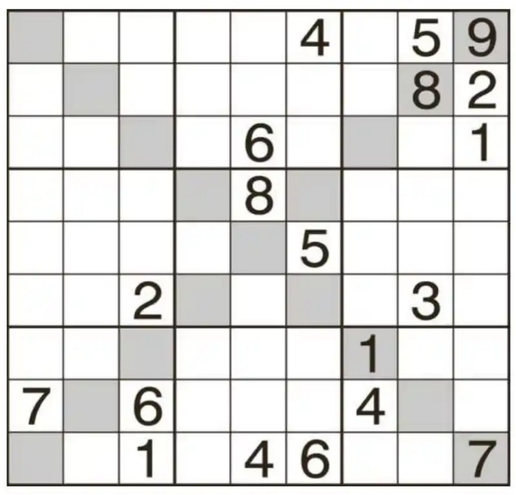
## KAKURO- 3304



**SOLUTION TO 3303**

**To solve the puzzle:** Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

## SU DO KU X - 3851



**SOLUTION TO 3850**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| 2 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 7 |
| 1 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 8 |
| 6 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 2 |
| 4 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | 7 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| 5 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 9 |
| 9 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 1 |

**To solve the puzzle:** The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

**WEST ASIA CRISIS:** Islamic Republic signals defiance after US-Israel strikes

# Mojtaba Khamenei named Iranian leader

## Hardline cleric succeeds his father as conflict with US and Israel escalates

DUBAI, AP/PTI

Iran named the hard-line Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei to succeed his late father as supreme leader on Monday, signalling no let-up in the war launched by the US and Israel. Oil prices surged as Iran attacked regional energy infrastructure and the US and Israel bombed targets across Iran.

With Iran's theocracy under assault for more than a week, the country's Assembly of Experts chose the secretive 56-year-old cleric, who has close ties to the paramilitary Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, as the new supreme leader. The Guard has been firing missiles and drones at Israel and Gulf Arab states since Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who ruled Iran for 37 years, was killed during the war's opening salvo.

The appointment marked another sign of defiance by Iran's embattled leadership after more than a week of heavy US and Israeli bombardment, suggesting that Tehran is not close to giving up what it considers a fight for the country's existence.

World markets plummeted following the news, and Brent crude oil, the international standard, surged to nearly USD 120 a barrel on Monday, about 65 per cent higher than when the war started, before retreating.

Iran's attacks in the Strait of Hormuz have also all but stopped tankers from using the key shipping lane through which a fifth of the world's oil is carried. Fire broke out at an oil facility that Iran attacked in the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain's only oil refinery was apparently also hit, and Saudi Arabia said it had intercepted several drones attacking its Shaybah oil field.

In Israel, sirens blared multiple times on Monday as Iran's drones and missiles continued their attacks. A man was killed in central Israel in a missile strike, the first such death in Israel in a week, and a woman was wounded.

Israel said it struck the Iranian city of Isfahan, hitting command centres for the Revolutionary Guard and its volunteer Basij force, as well as a rocket engine production facility and missile launch sites. There was no immediate confirmation from Iran. The younger Khamenei, who has not been seen in public since the war started, was long considered a potential successor — even before the Israeli strike killed his father. His wife, Zahra Haddad Adel, was killed in the same Israeli strike that killed the 86-year-old Ali Khamenei.

Political figures within Iran have criticised handing over the supreme leader's title based on heredity, comparing it to the monarchy overthrown in the Iranian Revolution in 1979. But top clerics in the Assembly of Experts apparently voted for continuity.

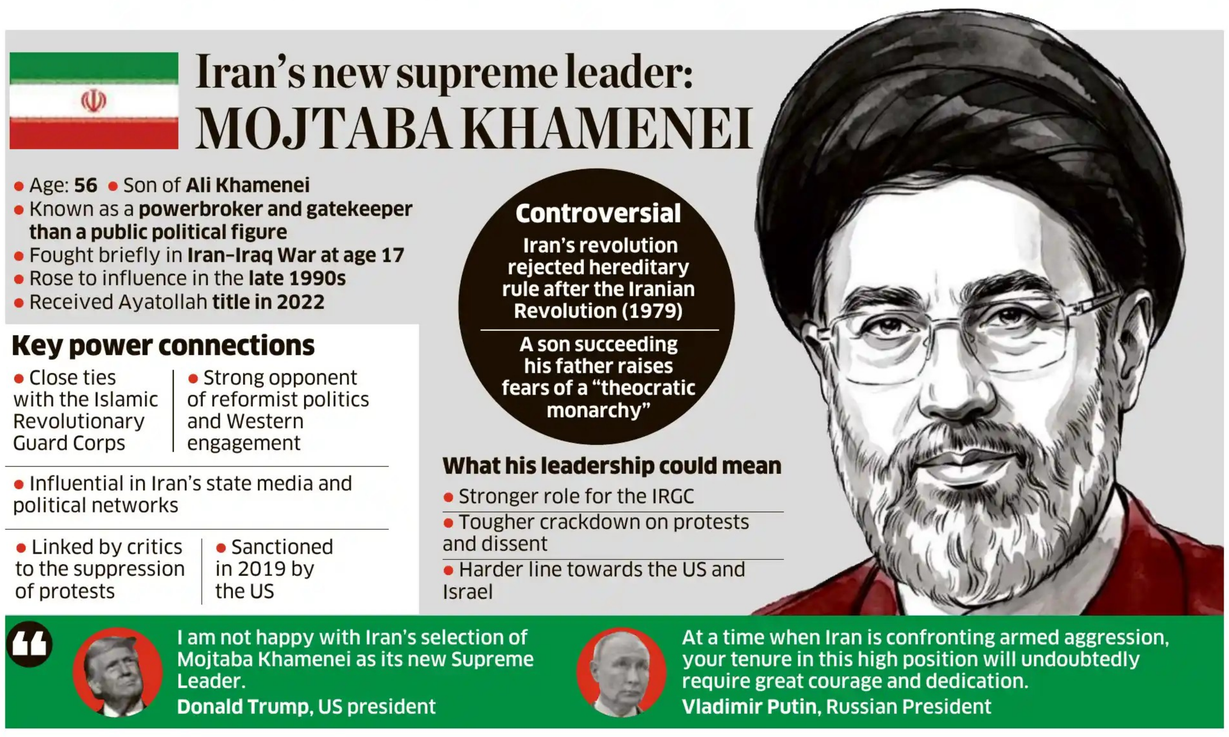
Khamenei, who is seen as even more hard-line than his late father, will now be in charge of Iran's armed forces and any decision about Tehran's nuclear programme.

While Iran's key nuclear sites are in ruins after the US bombed them during the 12-day Israel-Iran war in June, it still has highly enriched uranium that is a technical step away from weapons-grade levels. Khamenei could choose to do what his father never did — build a nuclear bomb.

Israel has already described him as a potential target, while US President Donald Trump has called him "unacceptable" and dismissed him as a "lightweight".

Both the Revolutionary Guard and the Iran-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah issued statements in support of Khamenei.

Top Iranian security official Ali Larijani, speaking to Iranian state television, praised the Assembly of Experts for "courageously" convening even as airstrikes continued in Tehran. He said the younger Khamenei had been trained by his father and "can handle this situation".


Iran's new supreme leader:
MOJTABA KHAMENEI
Age: 56 • Son of Ali Khamenei
Known as a powerbroker and gatekeeper than a public political figure
Fought briefly in Iran–Iraq War at age 17
Rose to influence in the late 1990s
Received Ayatollah title in 2022
Key power connections
Close ties with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
Strong opponent of reformist politics and Western engagement
Influential in Iran's state media and political networks
Linked by critics to the suppression of protests
Sanctioned in 2019 by the US
Controversial
Iran's revolution rejected hereditary rule after the Iranian Revolution (1979)
A son succeeding his father raises fears of a "theocratic monarchy"
What his leadership could mean
Stronger role for the IRGC
Tougher crackdown on protests and dissent
Harder line towards the US and Israel
I am not happy with Iran's selection of Mojtaba Khamenei as its new Supreme Leader.
Donald Trump, US president
At a time when Iran is confronting armed aggression, your tenure in this high position will undoubtedly require great courage and dedication.
Vladimir Putin, Russian President

## WORLD AT A GLANCE

Singer Rihanna's Los Angeles home was hit by gunfire on Sunday after a woman opened fire on the property while the singer was reportedly inside. The suspect fired around 10 rounds from a vehicle. AFP FILE

### IS angle probed in explosive near Mamdani's residence

▶ New York City's police commissioner said Monday that authorities are investigating whether men who brought improvised explosive devices to a protest outside New York City mayor Zohran Mamdani's residence were inspired by Islamic State, AP/PTI reports from New York.

The devices, which did not explode, were hurled during raucous counterprotests Saturday near Gracie Mansion during a "Stop the Islamic Takeover of New York City" event led by the far right activist Jake Lang. Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said the explosives could have caused serious injury or death. Two people are in custody for their alleged roles in the confrontation. Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said police were working with federal prosecutors and the FBI on the case. The FBI said agents with the bureau's Joint Terrorism Task Force were participating in the investigation.

### Anthropic sues Trump admin

▶ Anthropic is suing the Trump administration, asking federal courts to reverse the Pentagon's decision designating the artificial intelligence company a "supply chain risk" over its refusal to allow unrestricted military use of its technology, AP/PTI reports from Chicago.

Anthropic filed two separate lawsuits Monday, one in California federal court and another in the federal appeals court in Washington, DC, each challenging different aspects of the Pentagon's actions against the company. The Pentagon last week formally designated San Francisco tech company a supply chain risk after an unusually public dispute over how its AI chatbot Claude could be used in warfare. The lawsuits aim to undo the designation and block its enforcement.

An activist holding a placard reading "Kitchen, marriage, fatherland our response resistance" take part in rally calling for a global women's general strike movement in Berlin on Monday. AFP

### RSP heads for majority in Nepal

▶ The Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) is heading towards a two-thirds majority in Nepal's parliamentary polls, having secured 124 seats under direct voting and over 40 lakh votes under the proportional voting system as of Monday morning, PTI reports from Kathmandu.

The RSP has won 124 seats under direct voting and is leading in one, whereas the Nepali Congress (NC) has won 17 seats. The Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist–Leninist) (CPN-UML) has won eight seats, the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) seven, and the Shram Sanskriti Party (SSP) three, while the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) and an independent candidate have won one seat each. So far, the results for 161 of the 165 seats have been declared under direct voting. The outcome on the remaining four seats is expected to be declared in the afternoon.

### 14 migrants drown off Turkiye

▶ At least 14 migrants drowned on Monday after a boat carrying them collided with a coast guard boat off Turkiye's Mediterranean coast during a chase, AP/PTI reports from Ankara (Turkiye).

The incident occurred near the coast of Demre, in Antalya province, as the vessel carrying Afghans ignored calls to stop and attempted manoeuvres at high speed to escape the coast guard boats, the state-run Anadolu Agency quoted Gov Hulusi Sahin as saying. Seven people were rescued from the sea by coast guard teams and given immediate medical care, Sahin said. Fourteen others who reached the shore were detained by gendarmerie units. Search and rescue operations were continuing by land, sea and air to locate those still missing.

# Allies preparing to reopen Strait of Hormuz: France

PAPHOS (CYPRUS), AFP

President Emmanuel Macron on Monday warned that an attack on Cyprus was an attack on all of Europe and said France and its allies were preparing a "defensive" mission to reopen the Strait of Hormuz as the West Asia war entered its second week.

Speaking during a visit to Cyprus to discuss regional security, Macron said the mission would aim to escort container ships and tankers in order to gradually reopen the Strait of Hormuz "after the end of the hottest phase of the conflict". "This is essential for international trade, but also for the flow of gas and oil, which must be able to leave this region once again," Macron said in Paphos on the southwestern coast of Cyprus.

Speaking alongside Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Macron said a "purely defensive, purely support mission" would be put together by European and non-European states. The European Union on Monday said it was ready to "enhance" its operations to protect maritime traffic in West Asia. The EU has been discussing reinforcing its naval mission in the Red Sea after US-Israeli attacks on Iran triggered a broader regional war. Maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway in the Gulf through which a fifth of global crude passes, has all but halted since the war broke out on February 28.

Macron visited Cyprus after the island nation and EU member was targeted by Iranian drones in early March.

The vessel Lng Dubhe, a Chinese LNG tanker, leaves the Port of Bilbao at the Bizkaia Bay Gas regasification plant in the Spanish Basque city of Zierbena on Monday. AFP

## US urged India to buy Russian oil to ease supply: Energy Secy

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, PTI: The United States has urged India to buy Russian oil already floating at sea and redirect it to Indian refineries to "tamp down" fears of supply shortages and price spikes amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, Chris Wright has said.

However, the move, he said, is a short-term, pragmatic effort to stabilise the market.

In an interview with CNN on Sunday, Wright said he, along with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, had spoken to Indian authorities about buying Russian crude cargoes currently waiting to be unloaded at Chinese refineries. "India has been a great partner through this. I did call up the Indians, as did Treasury Secretary (Scott) Bessent, and said there's a whole bunch of oil floating, waiting to unload at Chinese refineries.

## Over 1,000 Indians evacuated from Doha in three days

DUBAI, PTI: Over 1,000 Indian nationals stranded in Doha have been evacuated over the past three days, authorities said on Monday.

Qatar Airways operated a Doha–New Delhi flight on Monday on which more than 300 Indian passengers stranded in Doha travelled to India, the Embassy of India in Doha said on its X handle.

"We thank Qatar Airways for operating the flight and for cooperating with the Embassy of India, Doha, for the same. Altogether, close to 1,000 Indians stranded in Doha during transit or short-term visits have departed on Qatar Airways flights over the last three days," it said.

"We are especially grateful to Qatar Airways for facilitating one urgent case involving the repatriation of mortal remains (death due to natural causes) of an Indian national and the travel of the family concerned on humanitarian grounds. We also thank Indian community volunteers for their assistance to the family," it added.

The post further said that Qatar Airways is planning three flights to Delhi, Mumbai and Kochi on March 10. Stranded passengers have been encouraged to use these flights to travel to India.

It also said the option to travel to Saudi Arabia via the Salwa border crossing remains available for those holding a Saudi visa.

Several Indians have travelled to Saudi Arabia to take flights to India since the conflict began. The embassy has also taken up cases of stranded passengers requesting Saudi visas.

"We thank Qatari and Saudi authorities for the same," it said.

Meanwhile, the Indian community has been advised to strictly comply with the guidelines issued by Qatar Ministry of Interior for their safety and security.

"Please use social media responsibly and do not take or share photos, especially related to the current situation. It is also advised that only authentic sources of information should be relied upon; please do not fall for rumours," the post said.

## Australia to grant asylum to Iran women footballers, says Trump

GOLD COAST, AFP: US President Donald Trump said on Monday that Australia had agreed to grant asylum to some of Iran's visiting women's football team, amid fears they could face retaliation back home for not singing the national anthem before a match.

The gesture ahead of the team's Asian Cup match against South Korea last week was seen by many as an act of defiance against the Islamic republic just two days after the US and Israel attacked it.

"I just spoke to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, of Australia, concerning the Iranian National Women's Soccer Team. He's on it! Five have already been taken care of," Trump said on his Truth Social network, less than two hours after an initial post urging Australia to take them in.

### TENSIONS STILL HIGH

- Turkiye, UAE and Qatar have intercepted Iranian missiles, while Israel says it has detected more attacks
- The International Energy Agency said no agreement on releasing reserves had been reached during a meeting with G7 finance ministers
- Israel says it is carrying out strikes in three areas of Iran and is also hitting targets in Lebanon.

## Pakistan orders fuel-saving measures

ISLAMABAD, AFP

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday unveiled a raft of austerity measures designed to save fuel as oil prices soar due to the US-Israeli war with Iran.

Pakistan depends on oil and gas from the region and last Friday raised prices at the pump by about 20 per cent, triggering long lines at petrol stations across the country.

Sharif, who described the decision as "difficult", said he was keen to avoid further increases that would hit the population, many of whom live in poverty.But he said in a televised address that action was necessary, warning: "The energy crisis is the new crisis."

At a meeting on Monday, he said ministers had agreed on steps to prevent the situation from worsening. Government offices, except banks, will move to a four-day week, with half of staff ordered to work from home. School holidays have also been extended, with lessons moving online after two weeks. Fuel allowances for official vehicles, except ambulances, have been cut by 50 per cent for the next two months.

The meeting also agreed on salary reductions for government employees, a ban on the purchase of new equipment and a reduction in overseas official travel except that "needed for the betterment of the country", Sharif said.

# Europe is now world's biggest arms importer

## Imports surge amid Russia threat and growing reliance on US weapons

STOCKHOLM, REUTERS

Europe became the biggest arms importer over the last five years as governments reacted to Russia's threat and waning confidence in the US security commitments, data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) showed on Monday.

European countries more than tripled their arms imports in 2021–25 compared with 2016–2020 to supply Ukraine in its defence against the Russian invasion and to rebuild their own militaries.

"The sharp increase in arms flows to European states pushed global arms transfers up almost 10%," said Mathew George, director of the SIPRI Arms Transfers Programme. Europe accounted for 33% of global arms imports, up from 12% in the previous five-year period, the report showed.

### EU must project power more assertively: Ursula

**The European Union must be prepared to project its power more assertively as it can no longer rely on a "rules-based" system against threats and must determine whether its institutions and systems help or hinder its credibility, Ursula von der Leyen said on Monday. "We will always defend and uphold the rules-based system that we helped to build with our allies, but we can no longer rely on it as the only way to defend our interests," the European Commission president said at a conference for EU ambassadors.**

DIGITAL SAFETY

## Aussies reach for VPNs as age-rule takes effect

SYDNEY, REUTERS

Australians were downloading virtual private networks (VPNs) in droves while one of the world's largest pornography distributors said it was blocking users as the country rolled out sweeping online age restrictions on Monday.

Last December, Australia became the first country to impose a nationwide ban on teenagers using social media. A separate law now requires AI-powered chatbot services to keep certain content — including pornography, extreme violence, and self-harm and eating disorder material — away from minors or face fines of up to A$49.5 million (USD 34.5 million).

The country also joined United Kingdom, France and dozens of United States states in requiring websites that disseminate pornography to verify that users are over 18. App stores must also conduct age checks before allowing downloads of software labelled 18+. Julie Inman Grant, Australia's eSafety Commissioner, said the measures were aimed at giving children the same protections online that society expects offline.

"A child today can't walk into a bar and order a drink, they can't stroll into a strip club or browse an adult shop or sit down at a blackjack table in a casino," she said.

"This just really brings those protections that we put in place for kids into the digital realm."

## US military kills 6 in strike on alleged drug boat in Eastern Pacific

WASHINGTON, AP/PTI: The US military said it killed six men on Sunday in a strike on an alleged drug-smuggling vessel in the Eastern Pacific Ocean as part of the Trump administration's campaign against alleged traffickers.

Sunday's attack brought the death toll to at least 157 people since the Trump administration began targeting those it calls "narcoterrorists" in small vessels in early September.

As with most of the military's statements on the more than 40 known strikes in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea, US Southern Command said it targeted alleged drug traffickers along known smuggling routes. The military did not provide evidence that the vessel was ferrying drugs.

Protesters hold placards as they rally against the Freedom Shield 2026, an annual joint military exercise between the United States and South Korea, in front of the US embassy in Seoul on Monday. AFP

# When internship trumps academic excellence

MAHIR LAUL

A hiring manager once shared something with me that perfectly captures the strange reality of graduate hiring today. "We interviewed two candidates last week," he said. "One had perfect grades. The other had spent a summer working in operations at a small logistics firm." The second candidate received the job because they solved problems better than others, but their academic skills were equal to those of the other candidates. The first candidate spoke about a group project at university. The interviewer acquired all the necessary information from the candidate through his distinctiveness.

The internship paradox refers to the hiring reality in which academic excellence alone is no longer enough to secure jobs, yet students often need prior work experience—usually through internships—to get those jobs in the first place. This exists because employers from all industries work to resolve it without drawing public attention.

Academic excellence still matters. Universities remain essential in building foundational knowledge. But increasingly, employers are discovering that the graduates who succeed in the workplace are not always the ones with the highest grades. Most successful employees achieved their goals through work experience that involved actual job tasks. Internships are where that experience usually begins.

The numbers support this shift in thinking. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) conducted research that found that employers offer

full-time positions to 70% of their interns, making internships the most dependable recruitment method organisations use. Another NACE study shows that graduates who complete paid internships receive an average of 1.61 job offers, compared with 0.94 offers for graduates who completed unpaid internships and just 0.77 offers for those with no internship experience at all.

Internship experience increases the probability that graduates receive numerous job offers by almost double. Employer hiring behaviour reflects the same pattern. When evaluating early-career talent, employers prefer candidates who possess relevant work experience. Employers are not just looking for academic knowledge. They are looking for signals of readiness.

## On-ground benefits

One recruiter I spoke with recently described a pattern she had observed repeatedly. When she asked candidates to describe a difficult challenge they had faced, graduates without internship experience often referred to academic situations, presentations, coursework deadlines, and group assignments. The candidates who had completed internships responded differently. They described their work with actual clients, their experiences handling business operations and unexpected problems, and their routine decision-making under actual work conditions. The speakers delivered their responses in a natural, rather than prepared, manner. As she put it, "Internships give candidates stories. And stories tell you how people actually behave."

The transition from university to the workplace is often underestimated. Universities operate within structured systems. Assignments have clear instructions. Expectations are defined. Problems usually have correct answers. However, the workplace is rarely that predictable.

For many graduates, the first job becomes the first real encounter with that ambiguity. Internships shorten that adjustment period. They expose students to workplace dynamics before they graduate. Even short internships can transform how students think about deadlines, communication, and responsibility.

Internships also help students understand their own career intentions. The connection between theory and practical work becomes clear to students after they spend time in actual organisations.

Employers research candidate development through their position requirements while measuring success under three different professional traits: communication skills, teamwork abilities, problem-solving capacity, and their ability to adapt to new situations. The development of these skills requires actual experience.

Professionals develop their skills through collaboration with team members, handling unanticipated challenges, and meeting project deadlines. Internships create the environments where those capabilities begin to form.

The traditional internship path is not accessible to all students because some face barriers. Universities and employers are increasingly experimenting with alternative models, including industry projects, short-term placements, and hackathons, as well as collaborative initiatives that help students experience real business challenges. The format may change, but the basic concept remains the same. Employers seek proof that candidates have applied their knowledge in actual work environments.

In many graduate hiring decisions, academic performance functions more as a threshold than a differentiator. Once that threshold is crossed, employers begin looking for signals that knowledge can be translated into action.

Experience provides that signal. Internships reveal that ability earlier than anything else. In a hiring market where employers need to choose candidates without complete information, such early signals become crucial.

*(The author is the co-founder of an HR consultancy)*

# Avoiding the trap of predatory journals

**Responsibility of vetting the journals rests on the researcher, while UGC has a reference list, writes Seshadri K S**

In academia, publications are the primary currency for advancement. Whether it is a PhD student or a tenured professor, everyone plays the 'publish or perish' game. Publication is the logical culmination of the scientific research method. Publications close the loop from data collection and analysis to public contribution.

To ensure clarity, most journals follow the standardised Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion (IMRD) framework. However, in an ecosystem that has grown from two journals starting out in the 17th century to an estimated 46,000 journals today, this 'pressure to publish' is exposing a dark side: predatory publishing.

## The publishing industry

The academic publishing industry is fiercely competitive, with greater profit margins than major commercial publishing sectors. This industry relies on an elaborate model of checks and balances: editorial boards, comprising established researchers, determine the 'fit' of manuscripts, which are then sent to colleagues for peer review, a rigorous form of quality control.

If the manuscript has no major flaws or concerns and requires no revisions, it is formatted and published. Typically, authors surrender their copyright to the publisher, who then profits by 'pay-walling' the knowledge. Libraries or individuals pay hefty subscription fees, often from the same public funds that supported the research, while editors and reviewers work for free, leaving the publisher to collect the dividends of a system they manage.

## The open access model

The irony of pay-walling taxpayer-funded research has long been a point of contention for academics. The open access model of publishing emerged from this anguish. In this relatively recent model, the researchers pay the publisher not to pay-wall the paper.

Here, the rigour of the publishing remains the same, and if a paper is accepted, the authors pay an article processing fee. The decision-making and payment pathways are essentially separate, acting as an ethical wall. Here, the paper is available immediately and widely accessible and has a greater readership. Here is where the predatory publishing practices creep into the system.

## What is a predatory journal?

Predatory journals are counterfeit publications designed solely for profit. They capitalise on the author-pays model to generate revenue while disregarding or diluting industry professional standards. These journals often operate as 'clones' of established titles; for instance, the reputed journal *Current Science*, published by the Indian Academy of Sciences, has frequently issued alerts about fake journals mimicking its identity to solicit articles.

Other predatory outlets simply dismantle the ethical wall between paper acceptance and payment. In both cases, the scientific integrity is compromised: if the only barrier to entry is a fee, then flawed methods and baseless findings can easily enter the public record.

## Fake news of the academic world

The hallmark of the scientific enterprise is reproducibility; science is a self-correcting process that thrives on rigorous rectification. Predatory journals fail in this foundational premise. By bypassing peer review or by publishing with low rigour, they pollute the global pool of knowledge with spurious findings, forcing future researchers to waste public funds sifting through the wheat and chaff. This is the fake news of the academic world.

An example was a paper published during COVID that was later retracted, which claimed that sound waves from beating a thali could kill the COVID-19 virus. Published in a dubious journal that has since ceased operations, such findings do more than add a line to the author's resume or bump up university rankings; they actively erode public trust in science and pose genuine risks to society.

## The trap that attracts desperation

Academia is a high-stakes race where being the first to publish is often the only way to claim novelty. If a researcher delays, they risk being scooped by a peer, rendering years of work seemingly redundant. Coupled with this is the institutional bean-counting of papers to measure progress.

In India, the University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations mandate PhD students to publish in reputable journals to qualify for their degrees. When these graduation deadlines or faculty promotion windows loom, the high-speed guaranteed acceptance of a predatory journal becomes a seductive, if dangerous, shortcut. Whether through genuine oversight or sheer desperation, researchers fall into the trap of prioritising the act of publishing over the integrity of the outlet.

## How to avoid this trap?

Academics are often thought to be the smartest, and falling for such scams can be embarrassing. Fortunately, there are ways to spot such journals. In 2008, librarian Jeffrey Beall began documenting suspicious publishers and later established criteria to assess a journal's veracity. Key red flags include:

- **Superfast:** Claims of peer review completed in days rather than the standard weeks or months.
- **Hidden fees:** Legitimate Open Access journals are transparent about Article Processing Charges (APCs) from the start and have an option to seek a waiver; predatory ones often spring a fee after acceptance.
- **Identity theft:** Mimicking the titles or websites of reputed journals.
- **Broad scopes:** A journal that claims to cover "Engineering, Medicine, and Poetry" all at once is likely just a fee-collection front.
- **Dubious credentials:** Editorial boards that lack diversity, use fake names, or include experts who never consented to being listed.
- **Fake metrics:** Prominently claiming readership ratings that aren't verified by the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) or focusing only on academic networking sites rather than the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).
- **Retraction watch:** Publications retracted or journals removed for questionable publishing practices.

Recent estimates indicate that nearly 35% of the papers in predatory journals originate from Indian authors. In 2018, the UGC introduced a list of legitimate journals, but later shifted responsibility for vetting to higher education institutions, while the UGC-CARE list remains a vital reference point. This move has placed the burden of due diligence squarely on the individual.

Today, a researcher's reputation is no longer built solely on their ability to discover truths, but also on their ability to discern. The name on the masthead of a predatory journal is not a trophy, but a tombstone. In the digital age, a paper in a predatory journal is a public admission of either laziness or a lack of integrity.

*(The author is an ecologist and a faculty member at ATREE)*

## BULLETIN BOARD

### IISER aptitude test

Applications are open for the IISER Aptitude Test (IAT) 2026, the mandatory entrance exam for admission to undergraduate programmes at the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) for 2026–27. The online application portal opens on March 7. The IAT 2026 exam will be held on June 7 (9 am–12 noon). The test is the gateway to study at IISER campuses, including IISER Berhampur, IISER Bhopal, IISER Kolkata, IISER Mohali, IISER Pune, IISER Thiruvananthapuram, and IISER Tirupati. Students who have studied at least three subjects among Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics and passed Class XII or an equivalent exam (or a minimum 3-year science diploma) in 2024, 2025, or 2026 with at least 60% (55% for SC/ST/PwD) can apply. Last date: April 13. The application correction window: April 16–18. Hall tickets will be released on May 24. Details: https://www.iiseradmission.in. Helpdesk: +91 7205457461 (2 pm- 5 pm) or askjac2026@iiserbpr.ac.in

### Free birding course

Early Bird team has floated free online bird-learning courses. The 100% online, mobile-friendly, self-paced courses include Level 1: The Wonder of Birds, which introduces the lives and importance of birds and Level 2: Into the World of Birds, designed to deepen knowledge and build birdwatching skills. The courses are suitable for beginners as well as those looking to advance their birding journey. Enrol: courses.early-bird.in.

### Community management internship

Xpression is hiring a community management intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of marketing campaigns, interpersonal skills, and effective communication can apply by April 8. The stipend is Rs 18,000-23,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/ESkGl.

### Stock trading research

Certiwisehub is hiring a stock trading research intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of accounting, financial literacy, and stock trading can apply by April 8. The stipend is Rs 1,500-2,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/9ZNWs.

### Human resources internship

Pronto is hiring a human resources (HR) intern in Bengaluru. Students who can coordinate interviews, recruitment and scheduling, and have knowledge of MS-Office can apply by April 4. The stipend is Rs 12,000-15,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/HRJdT.

### Talent acquisition internship

Capgemini is hiring a talent acquisition intern in Bengaluru. Students with relevant knowledge can apply by April 8. The stipend is Rs 10,000-14,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/3hm8b.

## STUDY ABROAD

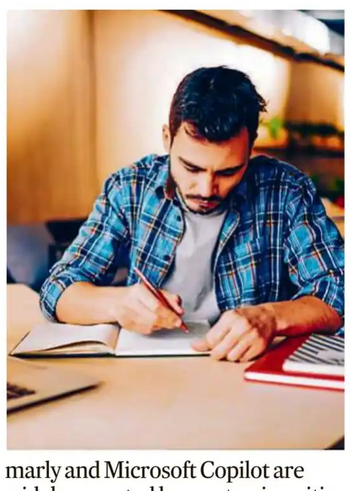
# Use of AI for essays and personal statements

UMA ASWANI

For many students aspiring to study abroad, writing a personal statement for college applications has been the most important task for years. This essay is what made them stand out amongst the many applicants. If your essay was not well-written and did not tug at the heartstrings of the admissions officer, you would not be accepted into the university. Strict measures were adopted to check plagiarism. This resulted in students putting in a lot of effort into writing their personal statement. They shared their own stories in the most effective way possible.

Now that AI and ChatGPT are accessible to students, turning in a college essay with a little help from ChatGPT has become common. Although universities are trying to use tools such as Turnitin, GPTZero, Originality.ai, Copyleaks or ZeroGPT to verify the authenticity of students' work, it is not possible to achieve accurate results, as technology is not entirely perfect. There is no foolproof method to ensure authenticity, while we also ensure we do not kill creativity altogether.

Now, many universities on their websites openly state that you can use AI for research, grammar check, brainstorming, structuring, and refining your essay. AI tools like Gram-



marly and Microsoft Copilot are widely accepted by most universities. These schools that allow partial use of AI would want you to acknowledge the AI tools you used and to what extent, as a reference or declaration section at the end of your essay.

To discourage the use of AI in your college applications, some of the top schools and Ivy League schools require you to sign an undertaking and acknowledge the integrity in your application process, wherein you are required to declare that the work is entirely your own and factual. Serious action can be taken against students if their work is found to be AI-generated.

## Why not AI?

AI collects information from various sites without the authors' consent and uses art from different platforms without the artists' consent. The ethical compass for this is ambiguous, but if you use such content, you are effectively copying the work of many others and spinning it as your own.

This is why students should refrain from using AI for anything meant to be creative, such as writing their personal statement or Art for their portfolio. Your college essay is referred to as a personal statement because it is meant to be just that. Let it be your unique story, your personal experiences and your passion and reasons for choosing a particular subject and university.

As a student who is planning on joining a prestigious university to gain knowledge and earn a degree, do not resort to AI shortcuts. Writing an essay is not that difficult. Universities accept students from different countries with different levels of English language skills. What they are looking for in your essay is to understand who you are, what makes you exceptional, what drives you to choose their university and the course. To simplify the process of your essay writing, they give you many prompts to choose from or frame their questions in a manner that helps you create a clear statement of purpose.

So, be original. If you are a graduate student, include your short-term and long-term career goals, your research interests, professors whose work you have been inspired by and would like to work with, and projects and publications you have submitted, and internships or work experience that have helped you prepare for the chosen course. These details cannot be written by AI.

Research the university websites and use reasons for choosing their university. You are expected to know what modules are offered and have a thorough understanding of what you will be taught and how you think you will benefit from it. You are also expected to read up about the professors in your chosen department and list a couple of their names whose classes you would like to attend.

In cases where it is alright and acceptable to use AI tools to research information, do not copy and paste. Rephrase and interpret the information in your own words. Use AI to your advantage without compromising your ethics or creativity.

*(The author is a career counsellor based in Bengaluru)*

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback? Write to us at: dheducation@deccanherald.co.in

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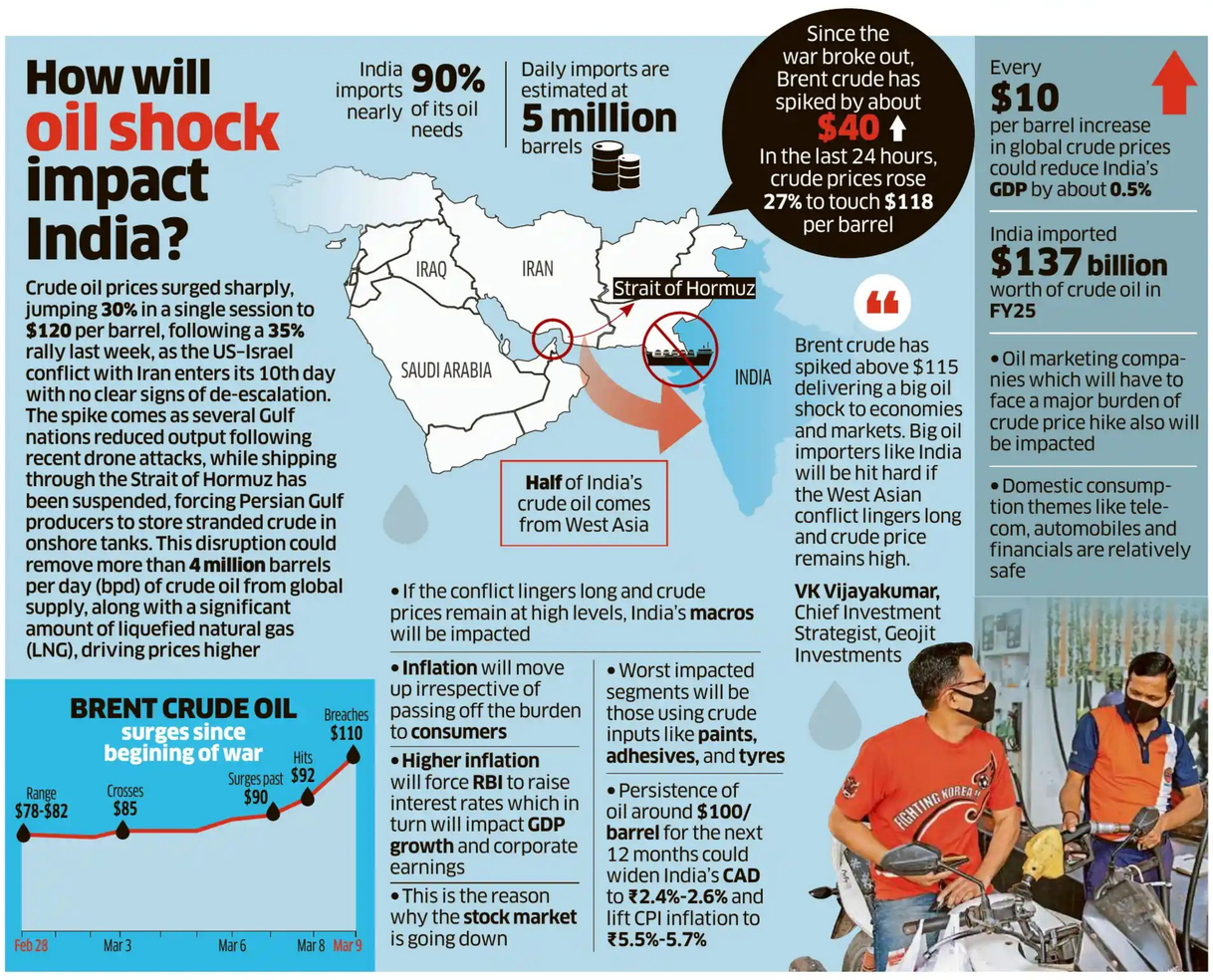
How will oil shock impact India?
Crude oil prices surged sharply, jumping 30% in a single session to $120 per barrel, following a 35% rally last week, as the US-Israel conflict with Iran enters its 10th day with no clear signs of de-escalation. The spike comes as several Gulf nations reduced output following recent drone attacks, while shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has been suspended, forcing Persian Gulf producers to store stranded crude in onshore tanks. This disruption could remove more than 4 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil from global supply, along with a significant amount of liquefied natural gas (LNG), driving prices higher
India imports nearly 90% of its oil needs
Daily imports are estimated at 5 million barrels
Since the war broke out, Brent crude has spiked by about $40
In the last 24 hours, crude prices rose 27% to touch $118 per barrel
IRAQ
IRAN
Strait of Hormuz
SAUDI ARABIA
INDIA
Half of India's crude oil comes from West Asia
Every $10 per barrel increase in global crude prices could reduce India's GDP by about 0.5%
India imported $137 billion worth of crude oil in FY25
• Oil marketing companies which will have to face a major burden of crude price hike also will be impacted
• Domestic consumption themes like telecom, automobiles and financials are relatively safe
Brent crude has spiked above $115 delivering a big oil shock to economies and markets. Big oil importers like India will be hit hard if the West Asian conflict lingers long and crude price remains high.
VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments
• If the conflict lingers long and crude prices remain at high levels, India's macros will be impacted
• Inflation will move up irrespective of passing off the burden to consumers
• Higher inflation will force RBI to raise interest rates which in turn will impact GDP growth and corporate earnings
• This is the reason why the stock market is going down
• Worst impacted segments will be those using crude inputs like paints, adhesives, and tyres
• Persistence of oil around $100/barrel for the next 12 months could widen India's CAD to ₹2.4%-2.6% and lift CPI inflation to ₹5.5%-5.7%
BRENT CRUDE OIL surges since begining of war
Range $78-$82
Crosses $85
Surges past $90
Hits $92
Breaches $110
Feb 28
Mar 3
Mar 6
Mar 8
Mar 9

# Crude price surge unlikely to stoke inflation sharply: FM

**The headline inflation for January 2026 stood at 2.75%**

NEW DELHI, PTI

The impact of global crude price rise on inflation is not estimated to be substantial at this point as India's inflation is near the lower bound, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday.

In reply to a written question in the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman said the price of both global crude oil and the Indian basket has been on a declining trajectory for the past one year, till the geo-political clashes commenced in West Asia on February 28, 2026.

"Between the end of February and untill March 2, 2026, the Crude Oil FOB Price (Indian Basket) rose from $69.01/barrel to $80.16/barrel. Given that India's inflation is near the lower bound, the impact on inflation is not estimated to be substantial at this point," Sitharaman said.

She was replying to a question on whether the government has reviewed the impact of rising global crude oil prices on inflation in the country.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

Global crude prices have been rising since February 28 when the US and Israel launched military strikes on Iran who retaliated with attacks on US positions in the region, as well as Israel.

Replying to the question, the minister said that RBI's Monetary Policy Report in October 2025, had estimated that if crude oil prices are higher by 10% than the baseline assumptions, and assuming full pass-through to domestic prices, inflation could turn out to be higher by 30 basis points.

However, the medium-term impact of the global crude oil price rise on inflation depends on several factors, including exchange rate movements, global demand and supply situation, monetary policy transmission, the state of general inflation, and the extent of the indirect pass-through.

The average retail inflation measured by the Consumer Price Index declined from 5.4% in 2023-24 to 4.6% in 2024-25 and further to 1.8% in 2025-26 (April – January).

The headline inflation for January 2026 stood at 2.75% and is near the lower bound of the RBI's inflation tolerance band of 4% ± 2%.

As part of inflation management, the Monetary Policy Committee has reduced the policy rate by 125 basis points cumulatively since February 2025, Sitharaman said.

Further, the government has also undertaken a series of administrative measures, including fiscal and trade policy, to control inflation and mitigate its impact on the common citizen.

## OMCs, paint stocks dive amid sharp spike in oil prices

**NEW DELHI, PTI:** Shares of oil marketing companies and paint manufacturers ended lower on Monday amid a sharp rally in crude oil prices due to the deepening conflict in West Asia, which has entered the second week.

Market analysts said that oil marketing companies came under pressure as higher crude prices threaten to squeeze their refining and marketing margins.

The stock of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd dropped 6.12%, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd tanked 5.05%, and Indian Oil Corporation declined 4.30% on the BSE.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, surged 14.17% to $105.9 per barrel.

Shares of Shalimar Paints tumbled 4.18%, Indigo Paints dropped 3.83%, Asian Paints fell by 2.75%, Kansai Nerolac Paints declined 2.09%, and Berger Paints lost 1.88%.

"The surge in oil prices had a direct impact on energy-linked sectors. Oil marketing companies such as Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation came under pressure as higher crude prices threaten to squeeze refining and marketing margins," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong Wealth, said.

# ABB invests $14 mn in two Nelamangala plants

**The company is also investing $21 million in its Peenya plant**

BENGALURU, DHNS

Zurich-headquartered international technology company ABB on Monday said it is investing $14 million in its two Nelamangala campus facilities, Bengaluru, to drive continued growth and deepen its localisation strategy. It is expanding production capabilities at Campus 1 and preparing the launch of new technology ranges in 2026, including advanced electrical protection and enclosure solutions.

"A major focus of the investment is the scaling of ABB's converter manufacturing facility, which will play a central role in supporting India's fast-growing sustainable mobility sector. Over the next three to five years, ABB plans to significantly expand its portfolio serving high-speed rail and metro transportation, reinforcing its capabilities across propulsion systems, converters, traction motors and related services," the company said in a release.

Its newly built Nelamangala Campus 2 will meet rising demand for power protection with a tenfold production expansion for uninterruptible power supply solutions and dedicated R&D. It will also house advanced rectifier manufacturing, excitation and blending systems, and an integrated gas analyser systems facility, supporting multiple industries and strengthening regional power and process infrastructure.

ABB also announced that it is investing $21 million in its Peenya operations to expand manufacturing capacity and strengthen advanced technology capabilities. "Key investments centre on increasing manufacturing facilities for low-voltage drives, and specialised motors such as flameproof (Ex) motors, roller-table motors, and large smoke-venting motors," ABB said. The company is also enhancing its services and digital capabilities by adding an innovation lab, remote monitoring and diagnostics, and upgraded training facilities.

Apart from Bengaluru, the company is investing in Hyderabad, Nashik and Vadodara. On Monday, the company announced that it will invest a further $75 million in India during 2026 to significantly expand its manufacturing footprint and research and development (R&D) capabilities. About 85% of ABB's products and solutions sold in India are manufactured locally. The investment will support growth across ABB's Electrification, Motion and Automation business areas.

## Tech Mahindra denies rumours of mass layoffs

**BENGALURU , DHNS:** IT services company Tech Mahindra on Monday denied rumours about a significant reduction in its workforce. For a couple of days now, many posts have been circulating on social media platforms, claiming that Tech Mahindra is planning to reduce its workforce.

The company, in a BSE filing, said that it has received calls and has noted certain social media posts regarding a market rumour of a potential significant reduction in headcount.

"In view of the above speculation, the Company, on its own accord, considers it necessary to clarify to the Stock Exchanges that no such proposal is under consideration and categorically denies any such market rumours. The Company has complied with and continues to comply with the relevant disclosure norms under the SEBI Listing Regulations," it said in the filing.

# Meesho gets Rs 1,500 cr tax notice

BENGALURU, DHNS

E-commerce platform Meesho shares fell nearly 10% on Monday after it received an income tax demand notice of around Rs 1,500 crore, including interest. The company is currently evaluating the Assessment Order and does not concur with the observations and adjustments made in the Assessment Order. It believes that it has adequate legal and factual grounds to contest the same and is taking necessary steps to protect its interest, Meesho said in a BSE filing.

The company received the notice on March 6 for the assessment year 2023-24.

The filing said that the demand order is based on certain additions and adjustments to the income reported by the company.

The e-commerce firm said that a similar demand order was issued for the assessment year 2022-23 as well, which it disclosed in detail in the prospectus filed on December 5, 2025.

"As indicated therein, the High Court of Karnataka, by an order dated April 17, 2025, granted an interim stay on such demand notice, and the matter is currently pending. The Assessment Order along with the Demand Notice does not have any major adverse impact on the Company's financial position, operations, or other activities," the company added in a filing.

For the quarter ended December 2025, the company posted a 12-fold y-o-y increase in its consolidated net loss to Rs 490.7 crore compared to Rs 37.4 crore in the same quarter last year. In its first quarterly results post-IPO, the company's revenue from operations stood at Rs 3,517.6 crore for the December quarter, a 31% increase compared to Rs 2,678.6 crore.

Shares of the company closed at Rs 143.20 on Monday, down 9.99% compared to the previous close on the BSE.

# West Asia conflict: Firms proactively reviewing contingency plans, says Nasscom

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Companies are reviewing and activating contingency frameworks to ensure operational continuity and uninterrupted service delivery in the event of regional disruptions, IT body Nasscom said on Monday. It has issued another advisory to member companies, urging heightened vigilance and preparedness across business continuity and cybersecurity frameworks.

Nasscom said its member companies have taken steps, including prioritising employee well-being by enabling remote work arrangements and closely monitoring the situation for employees located in affected geographies. Last week, drones hit three of Amazon's cloud computing businesses in the UAE and Bahrain.

The IT industry body said firms are evaluating alternate infrastructure routing to ensure cloud and data centre resilience and safeguard critical systems. Also, companies are advising employees to limit non-essential travel through the region and explore alternative transit routes when required. Organisations are also engaging with clients to communicate preparedness measures and ensure continuity of services.

Nasscom also highlighted that periods of geopolitical uncertainty often see a rise in coordinated cyber threats, disinformation campaigns, and infrastructure targeting. It has advised organisations to strengthen their cybersecurity posture.

As an immediate priority, Nasscom has recommended the rotation of credentials organisation-wide and applying patches for critical CVEs (Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures).

It has asked organisations to enforce multi-factor authentication on all external access paths (VPN, RDP, SSH, cloud admin) and implement conditional access controls to counter token-theft and adversary-in-the-middle attacks.

It has also asked organisations to engage ISPs (Internet Service Providers) and cloud providers for DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) scrubbing capacity. Maintain air-gapped backups for ICS/OT, core banking, and healthcare systems. Nasscom has also stressed conducting employee awareness on social engineering attacks themed around a possible war-like situation, government alerts with the intent to cause harm.

## Flipkart shifts domicile to India

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Ecommerce company Flipkart has completed the process of shifting its domicile to India from Singapore. This now paves the way for the company to go ahead with its listing plans.

Flipkart in a statement confirmed the development, and said that it has received Government of India approval for its internal restructuring, pursuant to which Flipkart Internet Private Limited is now the holding entity of the Flipkart group. "This completes the redomiciliation of the Flipkart group to India, a significant milestone that reflects our deep and long-term commitment to India," it added.

It has begun discussions with several investment banks to evaluate its public market debut.

# 'India should promote more plug-in hybrids'

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** NITI Aayog member Dr VK Saraswat said on Monday that India should promote more plug-in hybrids across the spectrum, not just in the high-end vehicles, but in small vehicles too.

Speaking at the Japan–India Mobility Summit 2026 (JIMS 2026) held in Bengaluru, Saraswat said he believes and that all studies between Japan and India have shown that plug-in hybrids give a much better lifecycle emission compared to even the best of electric vehicles. He urged collaboration between India and Japan in this space.

The PHEVs (plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle) have both an engine and a motor, and one can choose among the fuels, conventional fuel or alternative fuel such as bio-diesel.

"India and Japan bring deeply complementary strengths to the future of mobility. While India offers scale, market growth and expanding capabilities in software and AI, Japan contributes advanced technological depth, engineering excellence and global leadership in safety and mobility systems," he said, adding that the next phase of our partnership should move beyond infrastructure towards technology co-creation - from hydrogen mobility and smart transport systems to next-generation vehicles and integrated mobility platforms.

"Mobility transformation today is not merely a sectoral reform; it represents a structural redesign of energy, infrastructure, data and industry. Through pragmatic pathways and sustained collaboration, India and Japan can together build scalable solutions that accelerate decarbonisation while setting a global benchmark for sustainable mobility," VK Saraswat added.

The summit brought together policymakers, industry leaders, and technology innovators to advance collaboration in building the future of sustainable mobility.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan, the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO), and the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organisation (NEDO), in close collaboration with NITI Aayog and key industry players, underscored how the two countries' complementary strengths can accelerate innovation across mobility systems.

Speaking at the event, Geetanjali Kirloskar, Co-Chairperson, CII Japan Council and Chairperson & MD of Kirloskar Systems, said Japanese companies and Indian engineers & startups can co-create solutions from here for global markets. She also said that it is now time for all big investors to look at India as a strategic, long-term investment opportunity with a globally competitive export potential embedded.

## TCS launches Gemini Exp Centre in US

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Monday launched its seventh Gemini Experience Centre (GEC) at its Innovation Hub in Troy, Michigan. Established in partnership with Google Cloud, the newest GEC focuses on developing cutting-edge Physical AI solutions tailored for the manufacturing sector.

The new centre marks a significant step in the global expansion of TCS' Gemini Experience Centres. By the end of 2026, TCS and Google Cloud will have a total of 13 GECs worldwide, with 6 additional centres set to launch this year. As AI adoption accelerates, these centres will play a critical role in helping enterprises move from isolated AI pilots to scalable, production-ready transformation programmes.

TACKLING CRISIS

# Iran conflict forces Asian central banks into sharp policy rethink

TOKYO, REUTERS

The escalating crisis in the Middle East has dramatically changed the outlook for Asian central banks, with the huge supply shock posing a difficult trade-off between underpinning growth and countering inflation.

For emerging Asian central banks, cutting interest rates has become a risky bet not just because of the added price pressure from higher fuel costs, but the risk of triggering capital outflows through worsening terms of trade with the US.

The Reserve Bank of India, for one, expects to focus more on supporting growth by keeping interest rates low, sources have told *Reuters*. But a rush towards the safe-haven dollar, which is intensifying from the US-Iran war, may force it to ramp up intervention to prop up its weakening currency.

"We don't see a possibility of a near-term rate hike in India - we do not see retail fuel prices moving higher immediately," said Suvodeep Rakshit, economist at Mumbai-based Kotak Institutional Equities.

"At this stage, the immediate priority of the central bank will be what happens on FX. We expect them to continue intervening to curb volatility there. An afterthought will be the liquidity impact of that intervention and they will infuse liquidity as needed."

Thailand and the Philippines may be forced to reverse their dovish monetary policy stance, even as rising fuel costs hurt their economies, said Toru Nishihama, chief emerging market economist at Dai-ichi Life Research Institute in Tokyo.

"Many central banks will face a tough decision as they come under pressure from both markets and governments," Nishihama said. "With no clear end in sight to the conflict, the risk of stagflation is heightening day by day."

Share markets plunged and the safe-haven US dollar rose in Asia on Monday as oil surged past $110 a barrel, stoking fears of a protracted Middle East war on global energy supplies and higher inflation that may force central banks to hike rates.

The trade-off is particularly acute for manufacturing-heavy economies like South Korea and Japan, which are dependent on global trade, stable markets and cheap raw material costs - all being undermined by the widening Middle East crisis.

South Korea's central bank, which kept rates steady in February, could take a more hawkish stance if inflation persistently stays a percentage point above its target, said Citigroup economist Kim Jin-wook. "For now, we continue to believe BoK is unlikely to hike policy rate in response to a higher-than-expected oil price," with government steps to curb fuel prices limiting the pass through of oil moves on inflation, Kim said.

Developed market central banks, such as the Federal Reserve, also face a tricky act balancing growth, inflation and increasing political pressure.

The dilemma runs deep for the Bank of Japan. If crude oil prices stay at $110 for a year, that could knock 0.39 of a percentage point off growth, according to Nomura Research Institute, a huge blow to an economy with subdued potential growth of around 0.5% to 1%.

But unlike in the past when it could afford to pause rate hikes, the BOJ has less room now to look through price pressures with inflation having exceeded its 2% target for nearly four years.

That means the BOJ will have little choice but to repeat its mantra of continued rate hikes, while staying mum on the timing of such a move that could draw the ire of an administration hostile to higher borrowing costs, analysts say.

## Espionage wins Attractress Plate

**HYDERABAD RESULTS**

Donald Netto-trained Espionage, ridden by Kuldeep Singh, won the Attractress Plate, the feature event of the Hyderabad races on Monday.

**1. Bhupalpally Plate - 1200M:** Turiya (Shantanu Sharma) Antony Raj1; Equine Power (Ajay Kumar) 2; Dream To Fly (Naresh) 3; Beverley (Ajeeth Kumar) 4; Wb: 1/2, Hd, 1L. T: 1:14.10. TB: Bharath Singh. Fav: Turiya.

**2. Republic Plate - 1200M:** Bhairava (Rakesh Reddy) Ashhad Asbar 1; Knight Crusader (B.R.Kumar) 2; Rival (Ajay Kumar) 3; First Lady (Rafique Sk) 4; Wb: Shd, 2-1/4, 3/4L. T: 1:12.46. TB: Ananth Vatsalya. Fav: Lifes Journey.

**3. Astonish Plate - 1100M:** Star Of Opera (Rajendran) Akshay Kumar 1; Brilliant Lad (Yash Narredu) 2; Foxy Girl (Sonu Kumar) 3; Mountain Touch (Ashhad Asbar) 4; Wb: 2-1/2, 3/4, 4-1/2L. T: 1:05.96. TB: D.Netto. Fav: Star Of Opera.

**4. Suryapet Plate - 1400M:** Genie (A.C.Muthiah) Ekram Alam 1; City Cruise (Abhay Singh) 2; Muaser (H.M.Akshay) 3; Golden Bourbon (Kuldeep Singh) 4; Wb: 8, 3/4, 2-1/2L. T: 1:28.72. TB: Sathees. Fav: Golden Bourbon.

**5. Zoom Zoom Plate- 1100M:** Super Splash (Suresh Chintamaneni) Ajeeth Kumar 1; Yali (Antony Raj) 2; Quattro (Santosh Raj) 3; Buddy (B.R.Kumar) 4; Not Run: Maggie/ Wb: 3, 3-1/2, 2-3/4L. T: 1:05.82. TB: Vittal Deshmukh. Fav: Super Splash.

**6. Attractress Plate - 1200M:** Espionage (Prakash Babu) Kuldeep Singh 1; N R I Superpower (B.R.Kumar) 2; Vivaldo (Asshay Kumar) 3; Proud Mary (Rafique Sk) 4; Wb: Nk, 2, 2-1/2L. T: 1:12.00. TB: Donald Netto. Fav: One N Only.

**7. Red Satin Plate - 1400M:** Andre (Mrs Anusuya Gupta) Antony Raj 1; Term Deposit (Ajeeth Kumar) 2; Kaizen (Santosh Raj) 3; One Nation (B.R.Kumar) 4; Not Run: Caraxes/ Wb: 2-3/4, 4-1/2, 2-1/2L. T: 1:25.99. TB: Bharath Singh. Fav: Term Deposit.

**Bengaluru Dividends:**
**I race:** Rs 16w; 10, 15, 16p; Fc: Rs 47; Q: Rs 34; Shp: Rs 34; Thp: Rs 63; Tri: Rs 141 & 96; . Ex: Rs 2,067 & 1,417.
**II race:** Rs 59w; 22, 16, 76p; Fc: Rs 407; Q: Rs 235; Shp: Rs 32; Thp: Rs 418; Tri: Rs 16,144 & 4,612; Ex: Rs 42,806 (c/o).
**III race:** Rs 12w; 10, 13, 16p; Fc: Rs 45; Q: Rs 29; Shp: Rs 27; Thp: Rs 34; Tri: Rs 104 & 47; Ex: Rs 321 & 134.
**IV race:** Rs 63w; 25, 33, 18p; Fc: Rs 667; Q: Rs 495; Shp: Rs 127; Thp: Rs; 42; Tri: Rs 1,952 & 1,064; Ex: Rs 9,287 & 2,985.
**V race:** Rs 22w; 12, 13, 69p; Fc: Rs 128; Q: Rs 66; Shp: Rs 39; Thp: Rs 163; Tri: Rs 3,452 & 2,466; Ex: Rs 14,023 & 18,037.
**VI race:** Rs 57w; 17, 81, 10p; Fc: Rs 1,338; Q: Rs 1,089; Shp: Rs 154; Thp: Rs 39; Tri: Rs 8,062 & 4,606; Ex: Rs 49,161 (c/o).
**VII race:** Rs 28w; 15, 11, 143p; Fc: Rs 49; Q: Rs 22; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 417; Tri: Rs 1,074 & 1,255; Ex: Rs 8,908 & 3,230.
**Jackpot:** Rs 23,813 (9). **Runner-Up:** Rs 1,351 (68). **I Treble:** Rs 1,046 (44). **II Treble:** Rs 764 (129).

BADMINTON

# Attitude the biggest take away: Vimal

## Coach happy with Lakshya's game despite loss in final

Lakshya Sen finished runner-up for the second time at the All England Open Badminton Championship, this time losing to Chinese Taipei's Lin Chun-Yi in Birmingham on Sunday. AFP

HITA PRAKASH
BENGALURU, DHNS

Lakshya Sen's first round win against the defending champion and world No. 1 Shi Yu Qi of China woke everyone up from a slumber. A second round victory against an opponent he had never beaten before -- Hong Kong's NG Ka Long Angus (No. 29) -- then made people sit straight up and take notice.

If the quarterfinal win over China's Li Shi Feng (No. 6), with a 7-7 head-to-head record, had everyone on the edge of their seats, the Indian overcoming Canada's Victor Lai (No. 16) in the semifinal had followers jumping out of their chairs with joy.

Following a topsy-turvy 2025, the 24-year-old Lakshya's run to the final of the All England Open Championships created a flutter once again and brought back attention to Indian badminton - a sport experiencing a lull in recent times after years of high.

Though the world No. 12 Lakshya fell short in the final by losing 15-21, 20-22 to Chinese Taipei's Lin Chun-Yi, ranked 11, it was a performance that garnered praise for his resilience, mental fortitude and emotional maturity in a demanding draw.

"His attitude was the biggest take away," Vimal Kumar, former player and Lakshya's coach, told *DH*.

"Yes, he lost in the final. It was muscle fatigue in the shoulders after playing four tough matches that affected Lakshya from playing to his full potential in the last match. But there are a lot more positives," added the 63-year-old who trains Lakshya at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru.

According to Vimal, the three-game semifinal against Lai, with around 90 short rallies, was the most energy sapping while the most satisfying win came in the opener against top-seeded Yu Qi.

"At the Asian Games two years ago, battling fever the previous day, Lakshya as India's No. 1 singles player went on to defeat Yu Qi in China in the opening rubber of the team format. He has always been capable of beating the best."

**VIMAL KUMAR**
Lakshya's coach

"At the Asian Games two years ago, battling fever the previous day, Lakshya went on to defeat Shi Yu Qi in China in the opening rubber of the team format. He has always been capable of beating the best.

Following a quiet 2025 season, with the Almora-born shuttler picking up his lone title at the Australian Open in November and a second-place finish at the Hong Kong Open in September, the two quarterfinal losses in the previous four events were his best results in the season so far. However, the big improvements in Lakshya's game in the last four-five months helped him reach his second final at the Birmingham tournament after 2022.

"Improved shot selections have been the difference. Earlier he would rush and be in a hurry. Instead of calmly playing the shuttle to the back of the court, his lifts were into the mid-court area which gave the opponent a chance to finish it off. But now, he is controlling this aspect really well. Next, the net play has gotten better - taking it early, crossing the shuttle from the net area.

"Then of course his attack, because after the shoulder surgery, his smashes were not finding the right timing. But I was quite happy to see him connecting well, hitting well, and mixing it up with that wristy half smashes."

The Badminton Asia Championships in Ningbo, China in April will be Lakshya's next assignment after some rest and recovery. The proud coach is happy with his ward's progress since the devastating Paris Olympics semifinal loss in 2024 and is confident of Lakshya's showing in the future.

## Shaili, Ancy among key names to skip Indian Open Jump event

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Shaili Singh, Ancy Sojan and Jeswin Aldrin, are among India's leading long jumpers missing from the upcoming Indian Open Jump competition in Bengaluru from March 14-15.

While Shaili is set to start her season in April, as confirmed by her coach Robert Bobby George, Ancy is recovering from a calf injury following her bronze medal at the Asian Indoor National Championships in China last month.

Men's national record holder Aldrin, who hasn't posted an 8m-plus jump in two years, is recuperating from an injury while Murali Sreeshankar is now the star attraction for the event, which will take place at the Anju Bobby George Foundation.

The 26-year-old Sreeshankar, who won silver medals at the 2022 Asiad and CWG, enjoyed a strong return midway through last season after recovering from a career-threatening knee injury, posting multiple 8m-plus jumps.

Among triple jumpers, Eldhose Paul will also be absent as the reigning Commonwealth Games champion is recovering at SAI Bengaluru following his successful knee surgery in Doha last year.

Fellow silver medallist Abdullah Aboobacker and national record holder Praveen Chithravel's names have been entered for the event.

Shaili Singh

## Railway Institute clinch thriller

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Half-centuries by Madhava Dharwadkar (79) and Suraj Ahuja (61) proved decisive as Railway Institute South (Hubli) pipped NR Sports Group by two runs in a high-scoring thriller at the KSCA Group II - I Division league cum knockout tournament.

Despite a fighting 77-run knock by Gowtham Sagar, NR Sports Group's chase came to an end at 192/7 in 20 overs after the Railway side posted 194/6.

Sanjay Kumar Sihag (2/20) and Prithviraj (2/31) took two wickets each while defending the target. Madhav Bajaj and Venkatesh M scored 31 each.

**Brief scores:** Railway Institute South, Hubli: 194/6 in 20 overs (Madhava Dharwadkar 79, Suraj Ahuja 61, Venkatesh M 2-33) bt NR Sports Group: 192/7 in 20 overs (Gowtham Sagar 77, Venkatesh M 31, Madhav P Bajaj 31, Sanjay Kumar Sihag 2-20, Prithviraj 2-31).
DELL CC: 171/6 in 20 overs (Vinay Radha S 32, Sachin R Gankal 30, Dhanu 32 n.o.; Suresh Karani 2-31) lt to Central Excise & Customs: 172/6 in 19.3 overs (Rohan RR 54, Samarth R 43, Thippa Reddy 35 n.o., Rajesh Ayyakkannu 2-27, Aevant P Khothari 2-29).
KPTCL: 168/4 in 20 overs (Raghavendra Badiger 35, S Rajashekar 75; Arvind S 3-21) lt to SBI: 171 /4 in 18.4 overs [Prakhar Chaturvedi 66, Pavan Deshpande 41 n.o.).

## Cherie Chevalier favourite for main event

**HYDERABAD SELECTIONS**

Prasad Raju-trained Cherie Chevalier, to be ridden by Yash Narredu, will garner the maximum support in the Common Land Plate, the feature event of the Hyderabad races on Tuesday. The races start at 3:30 pm.

**1. Sir Bruce Plate - 1400M:** Cape May 1, N R I Star 2, Secret Option 3.
**2. Jangaon Plate - 1200M:** Analysis 1, Sharanga 2, Mysore Pharaoh 3.
**3. Aberader Plate - 1100M:** Greif 1, Catch The Worm 2, Clarity 3.
**4. Crown Treasure Plate - 1400M:** Northern Waves 1, Knight Regent 2, Corte Madera 3.
**5. Srisailam Plate - 1200M:** Dardanus 1, Toshiro 2, Master Class 3.
**6. Common Land Plate - 1200M:** Cherie Chevalier 1, Pleasant Star 2, Walking Thunder 3.
**7. Saroonagar Plate - 1200M:** Golden Unicorn 1, Exclusive Luck 2, Dhanadeepa 3.
**Day's best:** Northern Waves. **Jackpot:** 2, 3, 4, 6 & 7. **I Treble:** 2, 3 & 4. **II Treble:** 5, 6 & 7.

# India retain top spot in Pool B after 2-2 draw vs Scotland

## Despite a flurry of late attacking chances, neither side finds a winner

HYDERABAD, PTI

Indian players celebrate after Navneet Kaur (second from left) scores against Scotland during a pool match of the FIH World Cup Qualifiers in Hyderabad on Monday. HI MEDIA

India played out a hard-fought 2-2 draw against Scotland in their second Pool B match of the Hockey World Cup 2026 Qualifiers at GMC Balayogi Hockey Ground here on Monday.

With this result, both India and Scotland sit on four points in the group, though the hosts retain the number one spot due to a superior goal difference. Goals from Navneet Kaur (18th minute) and Sunelita Toppo (29th) were matched by Scotland's Heather McEwan (6th) and Fiona Burnet (33rd).

Scotland kicked off the proceedings, with both teams initially adopting a patient passing game. India, starting in a 3-4-3 formation, looked solid early on but temporarily lost their defensive shape to concede a penalty corner in the 6th minute.

Scotland capitalised immediately, with McEwan guiding the ball into the net for a 1-0 lead. India responded with consistent forward runs. Lalremsiami earned India's first penalty corner, but Udita's drag-flick went wide.

India kept up the pressure and won a second penalty corner in the 14th minute, but a trapping error allowed Scotland to launch a counter-attack, which was thankfully cleared by Sushila to keep the score 1-0 at the break.

India took control quickly in the second quarter. In the 17th minute, they earned their third penalty corner. Despite another fumble at the trap, Navneet Kaur recovered brilliantly, positioning herself perfectly to smash the ball past Scottish goalkeeper Jessica Buchanan to level the score at 1-1.

Scotland surged forward looking to regain the lead, winning a penalty corner in the 22nd minute, but Indian goalkeeper Bichu Devi produced a superb save against Amy Costello's drag-flick. Scotland intensified their press, making back-to-back circle entries and putting the hosts under pressure.

However, India pushed back in the 29th minute. After a frantic goalmouth scramble and a rebound off the woodwork from a penalty corner, Sunelita Toppo showed great presence of mind to tap the ball home, giving India the lead.

## Tilottama tops three selection trials in a row

**NEW DELHI, PTI:** National champion Tilottama Sen continued her brilliant form by winning a third consecutive finals in the 50m rifle 3 positions event of the selection trials for Group A shooters here on Monday.

She had earlier won the finals of national selection trials T1 and T2 in January and continued her form by winning the final of T3 also.

Kiran Ankush Jadhav won the finals of the men's event while Udhayveer Sidhu claimed the T3 finals of the 10m air pistol event.

Tilottama, who was down in the fourth position at the end of prone series, made a comeback in the standing series to secure the top spot with a final score of 357.0, 0.4 points ahead of Nischal Singh who finished in second with a final score of 356.6.

Olympian Anjum Moudgil took the third place with a score of 345.8. Sakshi Sunil Padekar, Mehuli Ghosh, Shriyanka Sadangi, Lajjakumari Gauswami and Nupur Kumrawat were the other finalists.

In the men's finals, 10m air rifle national champion Kiran Ankush Jadhav secured the top spot.

# VISL, Bhadravathi win

BENGALURU, DHNS

Shreyank Sagar's all-round show propelled VISL Cricket Club, Bhadravathi to a comfortable 96-run victory over Bangalore Telephone Cricket Club in the KSCA Group II - II Division league cum knockout tournament here.

Gagan D made 70 while Shreyank remained unbeaten on 68 as VISL Cricket Club posted 192/4 in 20 overs batting first.

Bangalore Telephone Cricket Club found the going tough as they crawled to 96/9 in 20 overs in pursuit of a 193-run target. For VISL CC, Shreyank (3/17) and Yogi (3/25) shared the bowling spoils.

**Brief scores:** VISL Cricket Club, Bhadravathi: 192/4 in 20 overs (Gagan D 70, Shreyank Sagar 68 n.o.; Yashwantha 2-23) bt Bangalore Telephone Cricket Club: 96/9 in 20 overs (Rakshith K 31; Yogi 3-25, Shreyank Sagar 3-17).
ABB Cricket Club: 119 all out in 20 overs (BM Lohith 49; Nishanth Gopal 2-9, HM Naveen Kumara 2-28, Chandrashekar R 5-21) lt to ITC Sports Club: 120/5 in 13.4 overs (Vinayaka Murthy K 42, Kishore Dutt N 33, Mallana Gouda 3-28).
Bosch Sports Club, Bangalore: 208/6 in 20 overs (Samarth Srinivas 84, Sriranganatha Rao M 86; Mohith L 2-35, Dilip Singh 2-26) bt BEML (2) Sports Club, Mysore: 149/7 in 20 overs (Aadesh D Urs 33; Geeth Sagar Netala 2-15, Naresh S 2-23).
BEL Sports Club: 213/3 in 20 overs (Harshit Pai 51, Anirudh Srinivas 28, Barath C 51 n.o., Shivu M 62 n.o.) bt Secretariat Cricket Club: 130/6 in 20 overs (Arya J Gowda 31; Shivu M 2-19, Ashok Kumar V 2-39, Raghunandan H 2-23).
Bosch Sports Club, Naganathapura: 159/6 in 20 overs (Satish Kumar BM 33, Pankaj K Gowda 56, Chethan Kumar J 28; M Shankar 3-27) lt to Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike: 161/2 in 16.5 overs (Nagarjun TM 52 n.o., Tahir Hussain 44, S Shylesh 57 n.o.).
Advocate Association Cricket Club: 191/4 in 20 overs (R Jagadish 74 n.o., Jagadeesha K 46 n.o.) bt SWR Rail Club, Bangalore: 126/8 in 20 overs (Vinod Kumar DS 42; Shreyas Kumar K 2-14).
LIC Sports Club: 205/6 in 20 overs (Abhin SP 55, Neeraj 70, Santosh S 25, Karan U 29, KK Kantesh 3-44) bt BEML Sports Club, KGF: 124 all out in 19.4 overs (Dhinesh K 32; Neeraj 3-16, OG Lokya Naik 2-17, Kiran M 3-20).
VISL Cricket Club, Bhadravathi: 192/4 in 20 overs (Gagan D 70, Shreyank Sagar 68 n.o.; Yashwantha 2-23) bt Bangalore Telephone Cricket Club: 96/9 in 20 overs (Rakshith K 31; Yogi 3-25, Shreyank Sagar 3-17).
BWSSB Employees Association: 189/9 in 18.2 overs (CR Kumarswamy 55, Adarsh MA 51, Ayush Ponnappa BU 28; Vineeth Manjunath 2-42, Gopi K 2/31, Harsh Oza 2-28, Basavaraja R 2-19) bt BEML Rail Coach: 144 all out in 19.4 overs (Sandeep T 53; Sampath Kumar M 2-18, Ayush Ponnappa BU 2-21).
L & T Construction Equipments Sports Club: 101 all out in 17.4 overs (Nikhil Vedanth RV 41; Ajay Bhide 4-10, Rishav Rawat 2-18, Raghavendra HS 4-19) lt to Infosys Cricket Club: 102/1 in 9.5 overs (Arjun Aravind Potti 33 n.o., Swaroop SH 60 n.o.).
Commercial Tax Cricket Club: 135/6 in 20 overs (Aries KA 25, Kushaal Mahesh Wadhwani 34 n.o.; Shridhar Jagatap 2-18, Ajmath Ali 3-29) lt to Hutti Gold Mines Cricket Club, Hutti: 138/4 in 16.3 overs (Sulthan Baba 40, Shridhar Jagatap 77 n.o.; Yogananda CK 2-29).
Karnataka Postal Sports Club: 202/7 in 20 overs (Shivaraj R 27, Kishore Naik K 49, J Koushik 52 n.o.; Ganesha Banagara B 3-27) bt Union Bank of India: 80 all out in 13 overs (Akash LN 2-8 Jayanth 4-15).
CIL Sports Club: 54 all out in 17.5 overs (Ashwani Kumar Mishra 3-14, MK Hemesh 2-16, Tushar Chaudhary 2-10) lt to Indian Air Force, Yelahanka: 55/1 in 6.2 overs (Kushal Keshav AB 31 n.o.).
South Railway Institute, Mysore: 161/4 in 20 overs (Surendra Rathore 68, Yashwanth J 53 n.o., Dhananjaya S 26 bt CMTI Club: 50 all out in 12 overs (Dhakshath P 3-9, Raghavendra V 3-16).

LOCAL CRICKET

## Karnataka's Sahil takes early lead in Tenpin Nationals

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Karnataka's Sahil Punjabi finished on top after the first three squads of Block 1 in Round 1 of the ARC National Tenpin Bowling Championships here.

Competing on a long oil condition, Sahil began with a score of 186 in the opening game. He followed it with a strong performance in the second game, delivering 11 consecutive strikes after a spare in the first frame to post 290. He maintained the momentum in the next three games with scores of 193, 204 and 182 before finishing at 161 in final.

## IN BRIEF

### State hockey trials for sub-jrs

Hockey Karnataka will conduct selection trials to pick the state teams for the 16th HI Sub-junior Men's National Championship scheduled to be held in Rajgir, Bihar and the Sub-junior Women's National Championship to be held in Ranchi, Jharkhand from April 1 to 12, reports DHNS.

Players born on or after January 1, 2010 are eligible to participate in the said championship.

The trials will be held at the Field Marshal KM Cariappa Hockey Arena on March 16 for Sub-juniors and March 17 for their women counterparts from 9.30 am onwards.

### Kirsten named SL coach

Sri Lanka named former South African Test player Gary Kirsten as their new coach on Monday after Sanath Jayasuriya quit following the team's early exit from the T20 World Cup, reports AFP from Colombo.

## Niki stars in K'taka's dominating victory over Chhattisgarh

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Riding Niki Prasad's ton, Rachitha Hatwar's big fifty and Vandita K Rao's four-for, Karnataka pulled off a dominating 234-run victory over Chhattisgarh in the BCCI Women's under-23 one-day trophy at the RCA Academy Ground in Jaipur on Monday.

Opting to bat after calling it right at the toss, Karnataka posted a massive 361/7 in 50 overs. Niki scored a 91-ball 123 (17x4, 3x6) while opener Rachitha (92, 97b, 15x4) missed out on a deserving hundred. Skipper Chandasi K contributed a half century (53) too in the big total while wicketkeeper-batter Shreya S Chavan provided some late fireworks with a knock of 21-ball 35 down the order.

Niki Prasad

After being sent on a leather hunt earlier, Chattisgarh were bowled out to a paltry 127 in 35 overs with Vandita returning with excellent figures of 4/17. Pooja Kumar M helped out from the other end with a spell of 2/17.

Chhattisgarh opener Mitali Sharma (31) and Kumud Sahu (27) were the only two batter to score beyond 20 runs for the losing side.

Karnataka, placed second in group, next play Bihar on March 11.

**Brief scores:** Karnataka: 361/7 in 50 overs (Rachitha Hatwar 92, Niki Prasad 123, Chandasi K 53, Shreya S Chavan 35; Sakshi Shukla 2-45, Rishika Shrivastava 2-61, Radhika Netam 2-45) bt Chhattisgarh: 127 all out in 35 overs (Aishwarya Singh 32, Kumud Sahu 27; Pooja Kumar M 2-16, Vandita K Rao 4-17).

## South Zone slump to another defeat

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Centuries by West Zone duo of Humaira Kazi (116) and Vrushali Bhagat (101 not out) handed South Zone their second consecutive defeat in the league stage of the Senior Women's Inter-zonal One-Day Trophy here at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence on Monday.

The openers forged a decisive 210-run stand as West made short work of the South's 257-run target as they replied with 260/5 in 45 overs.

Pacer Shabnam Shakil (3/44) was the only South bowler to trouble their batting on the day.

**Brief scores:** South Zone: 256/8 in 50 overs (S Shubha 50, Purvaja P Verlekar 42, Henrietta Pereira 65, Shani T 28, SA Lonkar 37; AA Patil 2-52, Radha Yadav 2-31) bt West Zone: 260/5 in 45 overs (Humairaa Kaazi 116, Vrushali Bhagat 101 n.o.; Shabnam 3-44). **SZ's next match:** North East Zone (Mar 11).

# Howe's Newcastle seek history

LONDON, AFP

Head coach Eddie Howe wants Newcastle United to produce a performance of a lifetime when they take on star-studded Barcelona in the Champions League round of 16 clash. REUTERS

Eddie Howe has challenged Newcastle to produce the performance of a lifetime as they aim to win the "biggest game" in the club's history against Barcelona on Tuesday.

Howe's side will make only their second appearance in the Champions League last 16 when the Liga leaders arrive on Tyneside for a highly anticipated first leg clash.

For the first time since 2002-03, when they reached the second group phase, Newcastle are one of the 16 clubs remaining in a Champions League campaign.

But having eased past Azerbaijani underdogs Qarabag in the play-off round, Howe knows Newcastle will have to make a significant step up in class to stun Hansi Flick's star-studded team.

Newcastle famously beat Barca 3-2 thanks to a Faustino Asprilla hat-trick in the clubs' first Champions League meeting in 1997.

That was the peak of the Magpies' brief spell as the Premier League's great entertainers.

Decades in the doldrums followed, reducing the club to laughing stock status under unpopular former owner Mike Ashley.

Meanwhile Liverpool's Premier League title defence collapsed during a horrific run of results from late September, and they face a battle even to qualify for next season's Champions League. Now Arne Slot's side head back to Istanbul, where they lost 1-0 to Turkish champions Galatasaray during the league phase. A deep run in the Champions League would be a major boost for Slot, who has come under fire from frustrated fans during Liverpool's slump.

Bayern probably deserve to be considered among the leading three or four contenders to win the Champions League, as the German giants chase what would be a seventh title in Europe's elite club competition. Vincent Kompany's team head to Italy to meet Atalanta with an 11-point lead at the top of the Bundesliga.

**Fixtures:** Galatasaray vs Liverpool (11:15 pm), Atalanta vs Bayern Munich, Atletico Madrid vs Tottenham, Newcastle United vs Barcelona, (all 1:30 am, Wednesday).

## ON TV

**FOOTBALL**

**Champions League:** Galatasaray vs Liverpool **(11:15 pm)**, Atalanta vs Bayern Munich, Atletico Madrid vs Tottenham, Newcastle United vs Barcelona **(all 1:30 am, Wednesday)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network, SonyLIV**.

**SUPREME FORCE:** The four limited-overs titles in two years stamp their authority

# India have it in them to rule WHITE-BALL CRICKET

**SIDNEY KIRAN**
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

Given the low average age of the Indian team and the endless supply chain, they have everything going for them to dominate white-ball cricket for a foreseeable future. AFP

Defending champions India came into the T20 World Cup as the overwhelming favourites to complete a historic hat-trick, and following a month of fearless cricket where they lived up to the tag in glorious fashion, the indications are they are on course to becoming the supreme force of this era.

The way they flexed their mighty batting muscle, especially in the last four games which were essentially knockouts following their loss to South Africa in the opening Super Eights game, is incredible to say the least.

The pressure of playing a home World Cup where expectations had skyrocketed manifold -- matches with no room for error in a format that's extremely fickle, oppositions who had shown they had found an antidote for India's hyper-aggressive brand of batting -- the odds were stacked against the Indians over the last fortnight. None of it overawed this all-conquering bunch as they kept marching on like battle-hardened warriors before slaying New Zealand in a lop-sided final at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Sunday.

Since the defeat to the Proteas a fortnight ago which punctured a hole into their cloak of invincibility, the Indians came out firing on all cylinders like champion sides always do. They raked up an astounding three 250-plus totals in four games as their batters, led by Sanju Samson, unleashed mayhem without a care in the world. At the elite level, most teams are evenly matched, but what separates the champions from the chasing pack is how a team delivers in must-win games and during clutch moments. This Indian team, over the last couple of years, has bossed them emphatically in limited overs.

After lifting the T20 World Cup in the Americas for a second time in 2024, that ended a long trophy drought — the previous ICC title they had won was the Champions Trophy in 2013 — the Indians have raked up three major trophies in a span of one year. They won the ICC Champions Trophy, an ODI event, last March undefeated, replicated the same in the Asia Cup (T20Is) in September before creating history in Ahmedabad as the first-ever host champions and three-time winners.

The manner of the triumphs, betraying no pressure whatsoever and dishing out fearless cricket, is something similar to what the great Australian side did when they won three consecutive ODI World Cups (1999, 2003 and 2007). In all of those World Cups, the mighty Aussies walked in as favourites, bullied oppositions with ruthless aggression, and when pushed to a corner in an odd game, they always found the will to survive. Winning just became a habit for them, and they cherished the intoxicating taste of it.

It's just two years of dominance, but given the average age of the current squad and the abundance of talent waiting to break in, thanks to the IPL that has acted as a conveyor belt of endless supply, there's no reason believe this Indian team can't dominate T20Is for the foreseeable future. In fact, even in ODIs, where they have a well-balanced unit.

Amongst the batters who played in this T20 World Cup, the likes of Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan and Tilak Varma are still in their early 20s and are yet to reach their peak. Samson, the Player of the Tournament following a hat-trick of fifties, is 31, and given the confidence this performance will give him, he's certain to to be around till 2028 when the next edition will be held in Australia and New Zealand. And when the 35-year-old Suryakumar Yadav does vacate the throne, there's Shubman Gill waiting in the wings.

Then there's the teenage prodigies Ayush Mhatre and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, both of whom have set the IPL on fire and were instrumental in India winning the U-19 World Cup for a record sixth time early this year. Lest we forget the incredibly gifted Yashasvi Jaiswal, an automatic starter in Tests and ODIs but struggling to find a place in T20Is because of the extreme competition.

On the bowling front too, the once-in-a-generation Jasprit Bumrah is 32 years old and at the peak of his powers. His back-up Arshdeep Singh is 27, Harshit Rana is 24, while 32-year-old all-rounder Hardik Pandya, if he's able to stay fit, gives the bowling attack a strong look. Even in the spin department, there are adequate resources.

Head coach Gautam Gambhir stated that this is just the beginning, and the team is hungry for more. It'll take the chasing pack some effort to stop them from feasting on trophies.

## THE NUMBERS GAME

India's 255/5 is the highest total in T20 World Cup finals.

The India innings was the first time a team's top three posted scores of 50 or more in a T20 WC match.

Sanju Samson's **89** is the highest score in T20 WC finals.

**Samson (89 vs England in the semi and 89 vs NZ in the final)** became the second Indian player to make 50-plus scores in both the semifinal and final of a T20 World Cup. Virat Kohli accomplished a similar feat in the 2014 tournament.

Abhishek Sharma's **18-ball fifty** is the fastest half-century in a T20 WC final.

With the wicket of Rachin Ravindra, **Jasprit Bumrah** became India's highest wicket-taker (40) in T20 World Cups.

**THE 96-RUN WIN IN THE FINAL**

| Is India's first win over New Zealand in the ICC T20 WC | Made India the first team to win back-to-back T20 WC titles | Made India the first home team to win the T20 WC | Is India's biggest win by runs in the T20 WC |
|---|---|---|---|

COMPILED BY ARUN GOPALAKRISHNAN

daCunha/AB/1087

# Gambhir lauds fearless cricket as SKY eyes Olympic gold

**SIDNEY KIRAN**
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav (right) and head coach Gautam Gambhir. AFP

Delighted at having delivered a historic third T20 World Cup, India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Sunday praised his 'courageous' wards for playing 'fearless' cricket while skipper Suryakumar Yadav proclaimed that his team is hungry for more glory, setting sights on the 2028 Olympic gold and retaining the crown the same year.

"The first thing is that the players have made me win. I have been saying this for a long time that you are as good a coach or as good a captain as your players. So I think credit needs to go to the players. The professionalism and most importantly the bravery with which they played," began Gambhir in a long post-match press conference.

"We play differently in bilateral tournaments and in ICC tournaments we played differently. I think we wanted to change that. I'm sure everyone has seen that. If you make more than 250 runs in the semifinal and final, that just shows the quality, bravery and courage with which they played."

The normally poker-faced Gambhir, who was coaxed into smiling by his jubilant team, said the era of modest scores is over and the goal for his team is to constantly keep pushing the boundaries. "The most important thing in this T20 format was that we didn't want to be afraid of losing. Because if you are afraid of losing, you never win. I always believe that high risk, high reward is very important in this format. Because many times it happens that you play in a conservative way.

"I would have been happier if we had been out at 110-120. But our target was always to make 250 runs. But we didn't want to play the 160–180 runs cricket. I think for too long, we played cricket with 160-170 runs. But for the last two years, it was the captain's philosophy, the captain's ideology – obviously, if the captain and coach are not on the same page, it can never be possible. The captain himself wanted to play high risk, high reward. And I think the credit needs to go to the captain as well."

Captain Suryakumar, seated next to Gambhir, said the team is determined to add more silverware to the burgeoning trophy cabinet. "Obviously, we are very excited about the way things have gone since 2024. The way we've played, we won three ICC trophies in a row. I think that drought ended in 2024 after a really long time, and from there, we never looked back.

"We knew how we wanted to play going forward. Everything changed post 2024. We played a different brand of cricket in 2024, and from there, we understood how this team needs to work forward, play forward."

## CHORUS OF PRAISE
FROM CRICKET FRATERNITY

"Winning the World Cup twice in a row, the first time any team has done so in the T20 format. Totally deserving and rightful winners of the trophy. What a fantastic performance by our team and a special brand of cricket on display. Well done, Team India. Jai Hind!"

**SACHIN TENDULKAR,** former India captain

"What an incredible finale to the most global and accessible @ICC event ever! Congrats to India, who became the first team to win back-to-back #T20WorldCup titles. Well done to Suryakumar Yadav and the whole squad and staff. Congrats also to @BLACKCAPS for their great campaign.

**JAY SHAH,** ICC chairman

"Congratulations India for winning the T20 World Cup... Very powerful side... Got better in the bigger games... Indian cricket in great place. Women's champion, under-19 champion and now the men's T20 champions.

**SOURAV GANGULY,** former India captain

# SKY: Do you want to win WC? Kishan: Do you trust me?

**SIDNEY KIRAN**
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

Sports is a great leveller. The moment one gets arrogant, and starts thinking they are bigger than the team or game, it can pull you down and force you to hide the hubris. But the moment one realises their mistake and embraces humility, it can offer unquantifiable joy in redemption. Ask Ishan Kishan.

Until the squad for the T20 World Cup was announced late last December, Kishan seemed lost to Indian cricket. Following a fallout with the team management during the 2023-24 tour of South Africa and subsequent transgressions like defying authority and choosing to train privately instead of playing domestic cricket, it looked like Kishan would go the wrong way like many gifted but temperamental cricketers of the past.

But better sense prevailed in the nick of time and the 27-year-old started to mend his ways, taking solace in his family and holy scriptures. He started to treat the sport with respect, put in the long hours at practice and got the bat to do the talking. While he knew the way back was long and arduous, he just focussed on maximising his skills and waiting for his turn. It happened in December when he was chosen for the World Cup, a moment Kishan saved on his phone to savour for the rest of his life.

Ishan Kishan. PTI

"When the meeting to pick the squad for the World Cup was about to happen, Surya bhai (Suryakumar Yadav) called me. I took a screenshot of that. I had a feeling he called me regarding the World Cup. He directly asked me if I wanted to win the World Cup. I replied saying 'Do you have the trust in me'. He said 'I trust you'. And that was it," said a candid Kishan during a media interaction following India's T20 World Cup triumph on Sunday night where he was one of the star performers with 317 runs and three half-centuries, including one in the final.

When asked how he kept himself motivated throughout the low period, Kishan, speaking like an elderly statesman with every sentence measured and oozing with maturity, said self-belief and humbleness were the key. "I think the first thing is that, no matter how bad your time is, it is very important to trust yourself. When you start doubting yourself, it creates a pressure on our game. It does not help you individually and as a team as well. So it's very important to have self-confidence and keep working hard.

"When you help others even during your bad time, good things will happen to you eventually. That's what I learned in domestic cricket. It was such a tough time where I couldn't focus on myself. But then I thought why not take the team (Jharkhand) forward. I could learn something from that. Your company is also important during tough times. You don't want any negative people around you. Have good company, work hard, keep faith in yourself and stay happy. That was my mantra," added Kishan.

The reborn Kishan revealed that playing the final wasn't easy as he lost his cousin, but words of encouragement from Hardik Pandya, whom he's very close to, helped him handle the emotion better.

BEHIND THE SCENES

# Gambhir thanks Dravid, Laxman for ensuring healthy pipeline

**SIDNEY KIRAN**
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Sunday dedicated the third T20 World Cup triumph to his predecessor Rahul Dravid and BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) chief VVS Laxman, the legendary duo who have played an integral role in shaping the current generation of stars.

"I think I should dedicate this trophy to Rahul bhai and then to Laxman because of what Rahul bhai has done to keep Indian cricket in such good shape," said Gambhir at the post-match press conference. "I have to thank him for everything he has done during his tenure. And then VVS Laxman for unconditionally doing so much for Indian cricket, especially behind the scenes, because CoE (erstwhile National Cricket Academy) remains the pipeline for Indian cricket."

After working in various capacities as a coach and mentor with both Rajasthan Royals and Delhi Daredevils following his retirement from international cricket in January 2012, the astute Dravid chose to work with the youth teams of the national side when he was named the head coach of the India U-19 and A teams in June 2015.

VVS Laxman Rahul Dravid

The reason Dravid chose the junior role rather than the glamorous and more rewarding senior one, despite holding all the credentials, was because he believed in identifying and grooming the next generation of talent rather than working with established stars.

A firm believer in putting the hard yards and taking no shortcuts to success, Dravid also wanted to work his way up the coaching ladder. That way, when he graduated to the senior team, which he did in 2021, he would have the faith of the players with whom he would have already worked.

He left a telling impact as the head coach of the junior team, winning the U-19 World Cup in 2018, which saw the emergence of players like Shubman Gill and Prithvi Shaw. Apart from the duo, Dravid had a strong role to play in the development of players like Arshdeep Singh, Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Hanuma Vihari and Mohammed Siraj.

After a successful four-year period, Dravid took up the challenging job as the head of cricket at the NCA in July 2019.

Set up with the intention of being a nursery for young talent to gain knowledge and graduate to the next level, the NCA sadly had turned into a rehab centre.

Dravid instantly went to work in changing that culture, converting place into a high performance centre. He implemented structured coaching programmes at the under-16 level, ensuring even kids got a taste of world-class methods. Having set the foundation, Dravid finally moved to coach the senior side in November 2021 where after losing the 2023 ODI World Cup final in heart-breaking fashion he went to end India's 13-year jinx in ICC events by bagging the 2026 T20 World Cup.

Laxman, who shares a strong bond with Dravid, took charge of the NCA in December 2021 and has overseen its growth from a small facility beside the Chinnaswamy Stadium to a state-of-the-art hub on the outskirts of Bengaluru, now called BCCI's CoE. Over the last four years, the affable Laxman has been a key player behind the scenes, working tirelessly to nurture the next set of talents. Mind you, he left a lucrative TV career in a bid to give back to Indian cricket.

Good on Gambhir to recall the efforts of Dravid and Laxman.

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